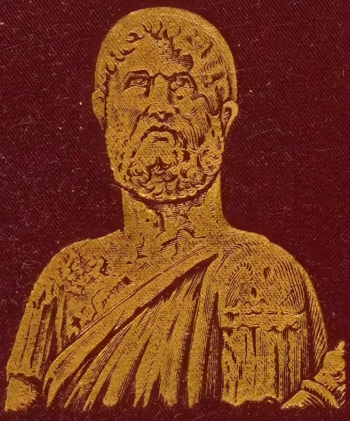


I
X
SOLA·NOBILITAS·VIRTUS
Arthur James Mason, D.D.,
Master of Pembroke College &
Canon of Canterbury.
A.WYON R
LONDON

9

11 FEB 1931

143.9 NEG

The Library
of

LUX VITA CAR. ITAS

ALMA·MATER·CANTAB

Wesley House,
Cambridge.

8DI45 Ø88 331 571

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/julianapostate0002gaet

JULIAN THE APOSTATE

Two Volumes, Demy 8vo, Cloth, 32s.

THE BARBARIAN INVASIONS OF ITALY.

BY PROFESSOR PASQUALE VILLARI,

AUTHOR OF

"THE LIFE OF SAVONAROLA," "THE LIFE OF MACHIAVELLI,"

ETC. ETC.

With Frontispiece, and Maps.

"Professor Villari's most recent book is of a kind which seems to us to be of great value. It is an attempt by an historian of marked distinction to write, in the light of modern research, a narrative 'suited for the general mass of readers' of the most obscure period of Italian history."—*Daily Chronicle.*

LONDON: T. FISHER UNWIN.

GAETANO NEGRI.

Frontispiece to Vol. II.

JULIAN THE APOSTATE

BY

GAETANO NEGRI

TRANSLATED
FROM THE SECOND ITALIAN EDITION
BY THE
DUCHESS LITTA-VISCONTI-ARESE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY PROFESSOR PASQUALE VILLARI

ILLUSTRATED

VOL. II.

LONDON
T. FISHER UNWIN
PATERNOSTER SQUARE
MCMV

All Rights Reserved

CONTENTS

PAGE

JULIAN'S ACTION AGAINST CHRISTIANITY . . 321

Religious Tolerance and Administrative Severity—The Episode of the Bishop George—Popular Tumults and the Persecutions of the Christians—The Destruction by Fire of the Temple of Apollo—The Exiled Christians recalled—Persecution of Athanasius—The Bishop of Bostra—The "School Law"

JULIAN'S DISILLUSION 421

The General Indifference—The "Case" of Pegasius—The *Misopogon*—Analysis of the Satire—Importance of the *Misopogon*.

THE SOVEREIGN AND THE MAN 471

Judgment of Ammianus—Judgment of Gregory—The Writings of Julian—The Panegyrics of Constantius—The *Banquet of the Cæsars*—The Epistle to Themistius—The *Exhortation to Sallustius*—The Letters to Iamblichus—Letters to Friends—The Books of George—Administrative Reforms—Julian and Eusebia—Julian and Helena.

PAGE

CONCLUSION 591

A Retrospective Glance—The Two Principles of Christianity—Absence of Doctrinal Apparatus—Gnosticism—Religion and Philosophy—The Position of Julian—Puritan Polytheism—Julian did not understand the Principle of Redemption—Lack of Scientific Spirit in him, as in Christianity—Progressive Civilisation and Science—The Condemnation of Julian—Extenuating Circumstances.

INDEX 633

ILLUSTRATIONS

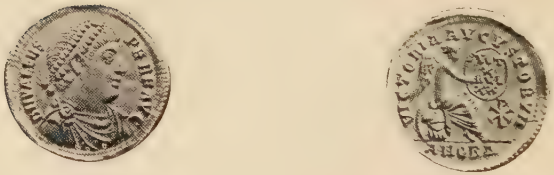
GAETANO NEGRI . . . . . *Frontispiece*

COIN OF CONSTANTINE THE GREAT .
COIN OF GRATIAN . . .
COIN OF VALENS . . .
COIN OF THEODOSIUS . . . *Facing page* 321

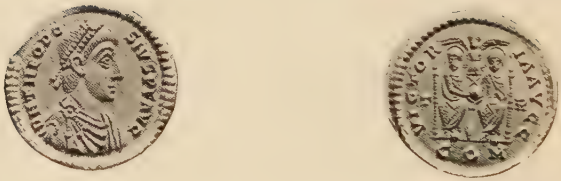
JULIAN . . . . . „ „ 421

From a Sardonyx Intaglio.

Coin of Constantine the Great.



Coin of Valens.



Coin of Theodosius I.

Coin of Gratian.

To face page 321.

JULIAN THE APOSTATE

JULIAN'S ACTION AGAINST CHRISTIANITY

While Julian felt his life in jeopardy, because of the suspicion and jealousy of Constantius, or even during the time when he represented him in the government of Gaul, he naturally concealed his ideas, his faith, and those intentions which he could only accomplish if he should ever attain supreme power. During all these years of necessary dissimulation, the young enthusiast, who amidst the cares of war and administration never neglected his studies and meditations, became ever more fervently zealous in his love of Hellenism, and in his desire to save it from the danger of invading Christianity, his ardour necessarily becoming more intense because of his inability to express it openly. But ever remembering his strained relations with Constantius, he took pains not to compromise himself by any act that might some day create insuperable difficulties. We have seen, on the contrary, that, after he had been

proclaimed Emperor by his soldiers, and before he had decided on civil war, still hoping for an understanding with Constantius, he participated in the solemn festival of the Epiphany, thus manifesting an excess of prudence that might be considered deceit.

But when all illusions of a possible reconciliation were dissipated, and Julian decided on the desperate venture of marching against Constantius, he dropped his mask, and, resolving to risk everything, revealed himself as the restorer of the ancient religion. It is not quite clear whether he made any public demonstration of his polytheistic faith before he left Gaul; but, during the voyage from Gaul to Sirmium, he openly and somewhat ostentatiously gave his expedition the character of an enterprise, placed under the protection of the gods. This Julian tells us, in a letter addressed to his venerated master, the philosopher Maximus, and written while he was on the march towards the Balkans. In the midst of the urgent affairs that claim his attention, Julian is grateful to the gods that he is able to write to Maximus, and hopes that he may be permitted to see him once more. He protests, and calls the gods to witness, that he became emperor against his will.[1] Then, with the facility and grace of description so natural to him, he relates his

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 536. *ὡς πρῶτον αὐτοκράτωρ ἄκων ἐγενόμην ἴσασιν οἱ θεοί.*

meeting with a messenger sent by Maximus himself, and expresses all the anxiety he had experienced at the thought of the peril to which the friend and master of the rebellious Cæsar might be exposed. In concluding the letter, he speaks of the signal favour which the gods vouchsafed to his enterprise, so that it was being accomplished without violence and with great ease, and he thus finishes: "We adore the gods openly, and the greater part of the army accompanying me is devoted to them. We sacrifice in face of all, and offer to the gods the sacrifices of many hecatombs. The gods command me to sanctify my every action, and I obey them with all my soul, and they assure me of great benefits from my enterprise, if only I persist."[1] Here we recognise the confidence and enthusiasm of the reformer in his first efforts, when everything appears to him bright and hopeful. A few months will be sufficient to dispel Julian's delusions and cause him to write that effusion of bitterness, the *Misopogon*.

His cousin being dead, and Julian by common consent proclaimed Emperor, he made his solemn entry into Constantinople, and gave to his youthful dream the sanction of law. "Every danger having disappeared" — writes Ammianus Marcellinus — "and having acquired the faculty of doing all that he willed, Julian revealed the secrets of his soul,

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 536, 19 sq.

and, with clear and precise decrees, ordained that the temples should be thrown open, the victims presented at the altars, and the cult of the gods restored." [1]

That Julian should take this resolution as soon as he possessed absolute liberty of action was, of course, only natural. But what was his conduct with regard to Christianity, in which he recognised a hateful enemy with whom he was about to engage in a mortal duel? This is the most interesting point in the study we are making concerning the person and actions of the Emperor Julian. His first movements clearly indicate the course which he intends to pursue. While providing for the reopening of the temples and the restoration of the Pagan worship, he invited to the palace the heads of the Christian Church, divided, as we know, into two parties who cordially hated each other, and, before the Christian congregations, who also were admitted into the presence of the Emperor, he courteously admonished them to quell their discords and let each one follow his own religion without fear of interference—"ut discordiis consopitis, quique, nullo vetante, religioni suæ serviret intrepidus." [2] With this discourse to the Christians of Constantinople, Julian re-established that principle of religious tolerance, inaugurated by Constantine with the Edict of Milan, and,

[1] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, i. 271, 8 sq.
[2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, i. 271, 15.

subsequently, forgotten by him—a principle doomed to be extinguished with Julian, only to rise again after fifteen centuries of complete obscurity. Julian remained faithful to this principle throughout the whole of his brief career. The Christian disputants and historians—Gregory of Nazianzus, Socrates, Sozomenes, and Rufinus—who did all in their power to place the Emperor's actions in the worst possible light, fail most signally in their attempt to make him appear as a persecutor. Certainly some acts of violence occurred during his brief reign, but they were the inevitable consequences of party passions and the habits of the times. Gregory bitterly insinuates that Julian was pleased to allow a free hand to the rabble, reserving to himself the glory of him who converts by persuasion, and he affirms that the Emperor's intention was to injure the Christians, without leaving them the opportunity of assuming the noble attitude of martyrs.[1] This, in reality, is equivalent to an acknowledgment, on the part of the disputant, that there were no acts of violence committed by the orders of the Emperor. Rufinus was forced to admit that Julian, more astute than his predecessors, instead of useless cruelty, resorted to flattery, rewards, and exhortations. And Socrates, who uses the word "persecution," declares that he understands by this word any act that may interfere in the slightest degree with the well-being of timorous persons.[2]

[1] Greg. Naz., Orat. ii. 72–74. [2] Socrat., *op. cit.*, 151.

It is true that the ecclesiastical historians narrate a few episodes that might justify the imputation of persecution attributed to Julian; but we must not forget that these historians wrote a century after Julian's death, when any number of legends had arisen, all equally devoid of critical foundation, and the more acceptable to these writers when most exaggerated. Of some of these stories the legendary character is too evident for us to give them any serious consideration; of others, which may possibly contain certain elements of truth, the responsibility should not be attributed to the Emperor. That Julian, having the power in his hands, naturally used it to advance the cause that he defended, that, in his judgments between the two parties, he employed different weights and measures, and was, of course, biassed in favour of the pagans, we easily understand, and also excuse, because Julian was a man working to achieve a determined aim, and it was evident that, in his efforts to attain this aim, he was occasionally induced to swerve from the most rigid impartiality. But this cannot be called persecution. Persecution consists in the seeking out and punishing adversaries simply because they are adversaries, in taking the initiative in acts tending to destroy them, in using violence as a natural and legitimate weapon. Of this there is not the slightest trace in Julian's conduct. If we hear of a few rigorous measures instituted during his reign, they are almost always

acts of prefects, who interpreted after their own fashion the Emperor's intentions, and, what is still more important, they were consequences of tumults and disorders of which the Christians were principally guilty. Thus, admitting that there was any truth in the account, evidently in the greater part legendary, related by Socrates, concerning the martyrdom of Theodulus and Tatian by order of the Prefect of the province of Phrygia, we must recall that these two, inflamed by religious zeal, put themselves at the head of a Christian insurrection and, penetrating into the interior of a temple recently reopened in the city of Merus, broke to pieces all the statues of the gods.[1] To suppose that Julian's government should remain impassive before acts of this kind, and to call it a persecution because a magistrate naturally punished the authors of the outrage, is worthy of wranglers, but not of historians.

Julian, like all other reformers, was under the delusion that the day he expressed his ideas and inaugurated a new era, all the world would fall at his feet. But, instead, when he came into power, he encountered an unexpected resistance, and discovered that the enterprise was much more difficult than he had imagined. From this arose a perplexity of mind and a feeling of irritation which, during the latter part of his reign, gave an appearance of harshness to his actions. He cannot,

[1] Socrat., *op. cit.*, 153.

however, be accused of having abjured those rational principles by which he was first inspired, or of having participated in the blind prejudice that caused the cruel and senseless persecutions of the preceding emperors. In fact, Julian's moderation, as we have observed, is explicitly recognised by Socrates, who says that Julian, having seen how much the victims of Diocletian's persecution were honoured by the Christians, and how their example incited others to martyrdom, decided to pursue another course. He put aside the cruelties of Diocletian, but not for this did he abstain from persecution, because, Socrates adds, "I call persecution that which in any way disturbs quiet folk." [1]

Now, according to Socrates, Julian's mode of disturbing quiet people and exercising his persecution, was the famous prohibition that prevented the Christians from teaching Greek literature (of which we shall speak later), his objection to having Christian soldiers around his person in the Imperial palace, his refusal to entrust to Christians the government of the provinces, his seeking to persuade the wavering Christians, by means of gifts and blandishments, to return to the worship of the gods, and, finally, the manner by which he procured a war fund for his Persian expedition, *i.e.*, from fines inflicted on those Christians who refused to be converted. Of these acts of persecu-

[1] Socrat., *op. cit.*, 153. διωγμὸν δὲ λέγω ὁπωσοῦν ταράττειν τοὺς ἡσυχάζοντας.

tion, it is clear that only the last could be considered reprehensible, although far removed from the habitual atrocities of those emperors who had really resorted to persecution. But of the aforesaid tyrannical measure we have no contemporaneous proof, not even an allusion to it either in Libanius, in Ammianus Marcellinus, or in the works of Julian himself. That there might have been some acts of excessive taxation is most probable, but a regular and decided law, that placed the Christians under a difficult financial condition, only existed in the imagination of the historians who came after.

Sozomenes, as usual, enhances and intensifies the legendary colouring in the narration of Socrates, from whom he obtains his information. The scenes of martyrdom he relates, even if they were true, could not be attributed to the responsibility of the Emperor, without making Socrates and Gregory contradict themselves, as they both recognise the tolerance of Julian, although, of course, attributing it to base motives. We find in Sozomenes an interesting account of the abolition of the privileges enjoyed by the Christian clergy—an abolition that certainly must have been considered as a most bitter persecution. Julian deprived them of the right of exemption from taxes, and also of the livings with which they had been invested by Constantine and Constantius, and obliged them to re-enter, if called, into the Communal Councils, which

was always considered a heavy grievance, because of the individual responsibility of the councillors in the payment of taxes and municipal expenses—a burden from which all citizens anxiously sought to escape. This administrative persecution is much deplored by Sozomenes as being little less severe than the cruelties practised by the former emperors. But impartial historians must recognise that the least Julian could require in the moment in which he was so anxious to restore paganism was to deprive the Christians of the special rights they enjoyed, and place all citizens, whatever their religion might be, on a footing of absolute equality.[1]

The tolerance of Julian is demonstrated and commented on by Libanius in his Necrological Discourse in a manner that leaves no doubt that, for the Emperor, it really constituted a fundamental principle of conduct. After narrating that Julian rendered the customary honours to the body of his enemy Constantius, Libanius says that he inaugurated the worship of the gods, "rejoicing over those who followed him, contemptuous towards his opponents, striving to persuade (them), but never allowing himself to stoop to acts of violence."[2] "Nevertheless," continues Libanius, "he did not lack inducements to renew the bloody persecutions of other times"; but Julian stood firm, convinced that

[1] Sozom., *op. cit.*, 488.

[2] Liban., *op. cit.*, i. 562, 10.

"it is not through fire and sword that he could impose renunciation of a false conception of the gods, since even if the hand sacrifices, the conscience reproves (*κἂν ἡ χεὶρ θύῃ, μέμφεται ἡ γνώμη*), and there is therefore a shadow of a conversion, and not a change of opinion (*ἔστι σκιαγραφία τις μεταβολῆς οὐ μετάστασις δόξης*). And then it happens that these, later on, obtain pardon, while those who are killed are honoured as if they were gods. Being convinced of all this, and seeing that through persecution the cause of the Christians has benefited, he abstained from it. "Those who loved virtue, he led to the truth, but he used no violence against those who loved evil.[1] . . . He loved to visit the cities in which the temples had been preserved, and he considered them deserving his favour; those which wholly or in part had become alienated from the worship of the gods he held as impure, but gave them, as his other subjects, that which they needed, but certainly not without displeasure."[2]

According to the opinion of Ammianus, Julian only committed one act of excessive rigour during the whole of his career: once only he gave full vent to the hatred that had accumulated in his heart. Entering Constantinople, he found the Imperial palace full of the courtiers of Constantius. They formed a class which had become opulent from the spoils of the temples, and with every variety of abuses, and gave a frightful example of corruption,

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, i. 562, 23 sq. [2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, i. 565, 3.

luxury, and vice.[1] Julian expelled them with a violence that, according to the honest Ammianus, deprived him of all serenity of judgment and possibility of discrimination. But, amongst these, Julian found the high officials and counsellors of Constantius; above all, that despicable eunuch, Eusebius, who had instigated the assassination of Gallus, and was the most implacable enemy he had near his cousin. Julian was unable to overcome his desire for vengeance, and instituted a Commission of Inquiry and Judgment, to whose decision they were referred, and this body, believing that they were carrying out the intentions of the Emperor, treated the accused with the greatest cruelty, and stained with blood, not always justly shed, the beginning of his reign.[2]

The Court of Constantius was entirely composed of Christians, because Constantius was a bigoted Christian, who would not have permitted or tolerated the presence of a courtier still faithful to the ancient religion, and his intimate counsellors were Christians likewise, and it was upon these that Julian wreaked his vengeance. But it certainly requires the blind partisanship of Gregory to insinuate that Julian, in inflicting these condemnations, was prompted, not so much by hatred of the courtiers of Constantius as by his ire against the Christians, as if it was possible that the Emperor would initiate a bloody

[1] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, i. 269, 13.
[2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, i. 267, 7 sq.

persecution precisely at the moment in which he called the Christians to his Court, inviting them to come to an accord among themselves, and to announce to them the full and secure liberty of their worship. That the courtiers of Constantius were Christians, and that from this circumstance Julian found another reason for his condemnation of Christianity is clear and natural. But this does not alter the fact that, in his conduct, he was actuated by sentiments in which religious partisanship had not the slightest influence. This we see most clearly in a letter addressed to his friend Hermogenes at the very moment in which he nominated the Commission of Inquiry: "Allow me to exclaim, as if I were a poetic speaker—'Oh! I who had no hopes of being saved, had no hope of hearing that thou hadst escaped from the three-headed Hydra!'—By Jove! do not believe that I speak of Constantius! That man was what he was. I would speak of those wild beasts who were around him, who spied on every one, and rendered him still more cruel; although, no doubt, even left alone, he was by no means merciful, notwithstanding to many he appeared so. But for him, since he is dead, may the earth lie lightly on him, as the saying is. As to the others, Jove knows that I would not wish them to suffer unjustly. But as many accusers have presented themselves, I have instituted a tribunal. Thou, in the meantime, my friend, come, and try and arrive as soon as possible.

For a long time I have prayed the gods that I might see thee, and now that thou art saved, with the greatest joy I exhort thee to come."[1]

And in another letter, which we have already quoted in the previous chapter, deploring certain injustices suffered by the Jews, Julian throws the responsibility on those who, "barbarous in their judgment, impious in their souls, sat at his table, and whom I, taking them in hand, have annihilated, hurling them to Erebus, so that I should no longer be obliged to be annoyed even with the memory of their wickedness."[2]

It is therefore indubitable that even this, the only harsh and reprehensible act committed by Julian, could not, by any means, be considered an instance of persecution. Julian, as we shall see from his letters, remained faithful to the principle he proclaimed at the inauguration of his reign—the principle of religious tolerance. This harmonised with the tendencies of his calm and well-balanced mind, to which all violence was repugnant. He loved discussion and logical debate, and, above all, must have understood, even without recalling the recent failure of Diocletian, that persecution would necessarily be inefficacious against a religion already spread over more than half the empire. But we believe, however, that Ammianus Marcellinus was clear-sighted and earnest in his judgment when he attributed a part of Julian's religious tolerance to a

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 503. [2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, 503, 10 sq.

calculation of skilful opportunism.[1] The intestine discords in Christianity were a powerful leaven of dissolution, and a formidable obstacle to the formation of a Church whose rule might be accepted with an absolute and unquestioned authority. Tolerance was a virtue which Christianity absolutely ignored, a virtue that was, in contradiction with its essential tendencies, a virtue that it considered a vice. Dogmatic intolerance was a phenomenon new to the world; it was the necessary consequence of the fact that around the monotheistic nucleus of the new faith there had formed a complex of metaphysical doctrine that ended by becoming an integral part of the religion, as if it were a manifestation of divine truth. Because of this, heresy became a crime, internal discussions in Christianity could not be tolerated, and the Christians of opposite parties regarded, hated, and fought each other with much greater hatred than they exhibited towards the pagans. Now, all being fair in war, Julian decided and knew how to take advantage of this condition of affairs to weaken his enemy. And as Arianism, by its alliance with Constantius, had become most powerful, being in fact the religion of the State, and had persecuted and exiled in great numbers the bishops of the Athanasian party, Julian did not hesitate an instant as to publishing a decree permitting the exiles to return to their homes,[2] not

[1] Ammian. Marcell., *op. cit.*, i. 271, 17 sq.
[2] Julian., *op. cit.*, 559, 18 sq.

doubting, and with reason, that, as soon as the two parties were again in contact, their anger would be rekindled and their disputes renewed. In this lay the great danger for Christianity. And Julian here exhibited great acuteness. If he had returned victorious from his Persian campaign and had enjoyed a long reign, Christianity, left to itself, and consumed by discord, would have wasted away, or perhaps entirely transformed itself. Christianity, Arian as well as Athanasian, at that moment needed the succour of the Imperial arm. Christianity, having departed from its pure origin, could only exist under the condition of being intolerant. And intolerance, to be efficacious, requires the assistance of material force. Julian's premature death rendered it possible for Ambrose, a few years later, with the assistance of Gratianus and Theodosius, to assign the final victory to Catholic dogmatism.

We find among Julian's friendly and confidential letters, Imperial decrees and manifestoes that furnish us with the best and surest means of discovering his intentions and judging his actions in relation to the Christians. That, notwithstanding his cordial hatred of them, Julian decided to abstain from any violence against their persons, and did not hesitate to condemn those acts which took place in spite of his orders, and in consequence of popular outbursts of passion, is demonstrated by most explicit documents. To Artabius he writes:

"By the gods, I have no wish that the Galileans should be unjustly murdered or maltreated, or that they should suffer any loss. I only insist that the worshippers of the gods shall be held in the greatest esteem, since the stupidity of the Galileans would send us to destruction, if we were not saved therefrom by the mercy of the gods."[1] And in a manifesto directed to the inhabitants of Bostra, on the occasion of threatened riots between Christians and pagans, he concludes: "Agree among yourselves, and let no one commit violence or injustice. The misguided should not offend those who adore the gods loyally and justly, according to the law given us from all eternity, and the worshippers of the gods, on their side, should not assail the dwellings of those who sin more from ignorance than conviction. We must persuade and instruct men by means of reason, not with blows or violence, or by tormenting the body. Now, as in times past, I exhort all those who follow the teachings of true piety not to do any hurt to the crowd of the Galileans, not to insult them, and not to attack them violently. We should not hate but compassionate those who act perversely in matters of supreme importance; because the greatest good is piety, and impiety the greatest evil. Those who, abandoning the worship of the gods, have given themselves up to the adoration of the dead and relics will find their punishment in themselves.

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 485, 14 sq.

We should pity them, as we pity those who are afflicted with some disease, and we should rejoice over those who have been liberated and saved by the gods."[1]

It would, certainly, be impossible to be more explicit, more reasonable and temperate, and, we may also say, more modern than Julian, in this declaration; more modern, because the principle of religious tolerance, promulgated by the restorer of polytheism, could not be renewed except by the downfall of dogmatic infallibility. But Julian must have found some difficulty in fully applying this principle in the midst of the inflamed passions of the people. The Christians having become, after Constantine, the masters of the situation, in their turn, acted as persecutors, and destroyed and sacked in many places the ancient temples. It was, therefore, inevitable that when the pagans returned to power they should desire to make reprisals. But the situation, then already sufficiently complicated, became even more difficult on account of the internal discords among the Christians—discords, which, as we have observed, were advantageous to Julian, but which he could not possibly countenance without wounding that principle of obedience and reciprocal respect which formed the basis of his religious policy. We shall see how Julian got over the difficulty, by examining his conduct in the episode of the murder of George, Bishop of Alexandria.

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 562, 5 sq.

During the reign of Constantius, Artemius, his trusty counsellor, was the Governor of Alexandria, and the Arian George was Bishop. These two men, because of the tyranny of their government and their accusations to the suspicious Emperor, were detested by the population of Alexandria—a city that, according to Ammianus Marcellinus, the faithful narrator of this episode,[1] was always ready to riot as soon as an occasion presented itself. On Julian's accession, he ordered Artemius to be brought to Constantinople, where, being found guilty of great crimes, he was condemned to death. The Alexandrians, who, for some time, lived in fear of Artemius' possible return and a repetition of his arbitrary cruelties, on receiving the news of his death, rose up against Bishop George, who was especially odious to the pagan part of the population of Alexandria, because he incited the Christians to the destruction of the temples. George and his two companions in faith and intrigue, Dracontius and Deodorus, were ruthlessly massacred by the infuriated mob. And fearing that their tombs might become sacred places, like those of the martyrs, their bodies were burnt, and their ashes thrown into the sea. Ammianus observes that if the Christians had so willed they could have averted the catastrophe, but that, instead, they remained indifferent spectators. Probably these indifferent Christians were the partisans of

[1] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, i. 289, 28 sq.

Athanasius, to whom the death of the Arian George was by no means unwelcome.

Julian, who reunited, in a common hatred and under the contemptuous name of Galileans, Arians and Athanasians, could not, from his point of view, as restorer of paganism, have been displeased by such a decided proof of zeal on the part of the Alexandrians. But he was Emperor, and aspired to be a just and impartial ruler, so he could not possibly allow this crime to pass unpunished. And Ammianus relates that he had decided to inflict the merited chastisement, but the friends who surrounded him being, as always happens, more Imperialist than the Emperor, persuaded Julian to content himself with sending an edict of reproof to the Alexandrians, so that, to all intents and purposes, they remained unpunished. This edict, preserved in its entirety, is of great interest on account of the insight it gives into Julian's character and his method of governing.

"The Emperor Cæsar Julian Maximus Augustus to the People of Alexandria

"Even if you do not respect your founder, Alexander, and, still more, the great and most holy god Serapis, how is it possible, I ask of you, that you forget to consider your duty towards the Empire and towards humanity? And I will also add the thought of us, whom all the gods, and

the great Serapis especially, considered worthy to govern the earth—of us who had the right of instituting proceedings against those who had offended you? But, perhaps, you were deluded by anger and passion, which is always dangerous and disturbing to the judgment, so that, notwithstanding your impulse, which, in the beginning, had rightly counselled you, you were induced to transgress the law, and shamelessly to commit, as a body, those crimes you so justly condemned in others.

"In the name of Serapis, tell me, on what account did you become infuriated against George? You will certainly reply that he incited Constantius against you, and introduced an army into the sacred city, and induced the Governor of Egypt to seize the most venerated temple of the god, violating the images, the votive offerings, and the sacred ornaments. Against you, naturally burning with indignation and attempting to defend the god, or rather, we should say, the property of the god, the Governor iniquitously, illegally, and impiously sent his soldiers, fearing more than Constantius, George, who watched him to see how he behaved, not out of fear lest he might be tyrannical, but rather that he might treat you with temperance and civility. Thereupon, enraged against this George, who was an enemy of the gods, you have defiled the sacred city, when, instead, you might have consigned him to the judgment of the magistrates. And thus there

would have been neither murder nor crime, only perfect justice, that would have protected you, the innocent ones, and punished this sacrilegious wretch, and at the same time given a lesson to others, however numerous they may be, who do not respect the gods, have no regard for cities such as yours and for prosperous populations, and consider cruelty as a necessary adjunct to power. Compare this letter with the last I sent you some time ago, and note the difference! What praise did I render you! And even now I would like to praise you, but cannot because of your transgressions. Your citizens have dared, like dogs, to tear in pieces a man, and after that they were not ashamed to uplift their blood-stained hands unto the gods. But George, you say, deserved this punishment. Certainly, I reply, and one even more severe and harsh. Because of his actions against you, you will say. I admit it. But if you say by your hands, I will reply, no, since there are laws that each one of you should respect and love. And if it so happen that some one transgresses them, the majority of you should follow and obey them, and not turn away from that which, from ancient times, has been providentially instituted. It is lucky for you, O Alexandrians, that you have committed this crime under my government, because, out of respect for the divinity and regard for my uncle and namesake, who governed Egypt and your city, I feel towards you a fraternal

benevolence. But a pure and rigorous government would have treated the culpable audacity of your citizens as a grave illness which must be cured by a drastic medicine. However, in place of this, I will offer you, for the reasons stated above, that which will be more acceptable to you, exhortation and reasoning, by which I feel assured you will be persuaded, if you are, as you are said to be, Greeks of the old stock, and if there remain traces of that admirable and noble origin in your souls and customs.

"This is to be notified to my citizens of Alexandria."[1]

When we consider that this edict was written by the most decided enemy Christianity ever had, it is impossible not to pronounce it an example of moderation and self-restraint. Bishop George must have been doubly odious to Julian, as an intolerant Christian, and as the friend and confidant of Constantius. The insurrection of Alexandria might, therefore, have been considered by him as a proof of zeal and devotion, as the most solemn demonstration of the favour with which the restoration he had initiated had been received in the capital of Eastern commerce and thought. But Julian, true to his programme, does not allow either bloodshed, violence, or disorder. He, certainly, does not allow the violence of the Christians who

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 488.

rushed to persecute those who did not believe as they believed, but neither did he countenance the violence of the pagans when attempting to take the law into their own hands. His programme was one of reciprocal tolerance, and he was still under the delusion that paganism had in itself such a power of attraction that, on its return to liberty of action and natural development, it might still attract to its folds the crowds that had strayed away.

But it was not easy to exercise tolerance in the midst of excited passions. The example of the Alexandrians was followed, according to Sozomenes,[1] by other cities of Syria, in Gaza, in Arethusa, where scenes of bloodshed and violence took place, promoted by the pagans to revenge themselves on the Christians, while, in other parts, the Christians, who were not alarmed, but rather, as it appears, very much irritated by this unexpected restoration of paganism, devoted themselves, with renewed energy, to the destruction of the temples. The most serious tumults were those of Cæsarea-Mazaca, in Cappadocia, where the population, in great majority Christian, after having demolished the temples of Jupiter and of Apollo, destroyed, when Julian was Emperor, the temple of Fortune.[2] The Emperor replied to this act of defiance with a chastisement decidedly severe, but of a purely administrative character. He removed

[1] Sozom., *op. cit.*, 492 sq.
[2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, 487.—Greg. Naz., *op. cit.*, 91.

from office the Prefect of Cappadocia, confiscated the property of the Christian churches, imposed a heavy fine, and deprived the town of its privileges. But it would be unjust to consider these proceedings as acts of persecution. Taking into consideration the principle he had imposed upon himself, Julian could leave his enemies in peace, but he could not, with impunity, permit them to rebel against him, and offend him in that which was nearest and dearest to his heart.

Those who, for these acts of defence, accuse Julian of violence and persecution, forget that as soon as the Christians, with the help of Constantine, obtained the victory, they, in their turn, became persecutors, not being able to withstand the influence and customs of the time. As an example of the intolerance of the first Christian emperors, we have only to consult the decree of Constantius and Constans, promulgated in the year 353. "We decree that in every place and every city the temples be closed, that no one be allowed to enter them, and that the liberty of doing evil be denied to the impious. We command that every one abstain from offering sacrifice. If any one perpetrates anything of the kind, he is to be slaughtered with the avenging sword. We decree that the property of the condemned be assigned to the public treasury, and we order that the governors of provinces, who might be negligent in repressing

these crimes, be also severely punished."[1] Certainly neither Decius nor Diocletian would have acted any better. But the most interesting document, as giving us an account of the manner in which the Christians oppressed the pagans, is the discourse of Libanius "About Temples," directed by him to the Emperor Theodosius. Although this discourse was written some years after the reign of Julian, it depicts a condition of things that had existed for a long time, and is symptomatic of the animus displayed in the conflict between the two still rival religions. This is the origin of the discourse. The Emperor Theodosius, with many decrees, and especially with one directed to Cinegius, Prefect of the East in 385, confirmed the enactments of the preceding emperors which forbade sacrifices. He tolerated, however, the continuation of such other rites as perfuming with incense and offering prayer, and did not order, or even encourage, the destruction of the temples. But the Christians seem to have found sufficient encouragement in the logic of things, and, therefore, without waiting for Imperial laws and orders, they devoted themselves to the work of overturning the temples, among which were some of the most beautiful monuments, concealing, under an appearance of religious fanaticism, private interest and

[1] See together with this one, the laws of the *Codex Theodosianus*, under the title of "De paganis, sacrificiis et templis." See also Liban., *op. cit.*, ii. 148.

avidity of gain. Against this abuse Libanius raised his voice in a discourse, addressed by him to the Emperor, the date of which must be ascribed to the years between 385 and 391.[1]

From this discourse we find proof of the degradation and moral corruption into which Christianity had been plunged as soon as it became powerful. This impression that we have gained from all contemporary documents is strongly confirmed by the discourse of Libanius. That he could address himself to an Emperor of Christian faith—and such an Emperor!—thus accusing implicitly the Christians and, more especially, the clergy and the monks, of every kind of violence, because of their thirst for lucre, forces us to admit that the truth of the accusation, at least in part, was so thoroughly clear that no one could run any risk from exposing it. We see in Libanius how polytheism retired from the cities into the country, where it was jealously preserved by the peasants, by the agriculturists, who, with the tenacity of simple-minded people living far from the social turmoil, practised the old ceremonies, and appealed to their accustomed and beloved divinities to protect their work. It is especially against those that the violence of the Christian clergy was exercised, as those priests enriched themselves by the spoliations effected in the name of a divine principle. These revelations are most

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, ii. 153.

valuable. Rightly to understand such a movement as that of Julian we must bear in mind that Christianity, having lost its characteristic of retributive justice and sublime heroism, had abased itself to the level of its surroundings, and had become a religion in whose protecting shadow germinated all those passions and vices which it ought to have radically destroyed, if it had thoroughly regenerated society.

We will choose a few examples from the mass of accusations and sneers which Libanius offers us. "Thou"—he says, addressing himself to Theodosius—"thou hast not ordered that the temples should be closed, or that no one should enter them, or that fire and incense and the honour of other perfumes should be removed from the altars. But that crew, wearing black clothes, who eat more than elephants, and who, because of their repeated drinking-bouts, give a great deal of work to those who serve them with wine when they sing, and conceal all this under an artificial pallor,—they, O Emperor, in defiance of the law, rush to the temples, some bearing clubs and stones and irons, and others, without these, bent on using their feet and their hands. Then they pull down the roofs, sap the walls, wrench the statues from their places, and hack the altars to pieces. And the priests must keep silent, or die. Having destroyed one temple, they go on to the second, and then to the third, in spite of the law, accumulating trophies

after trophies. This is done in the cities, but much more in the country. . . . There they pass like a torrent, leaving devastation in their wake, under the pretext of destroying the temples. And when in a field they have laid low its temple, they have also extinguished and murdered its soul; because, O Emperor, the temples are the souls of the fields, and they were the first nucleus of buildings that have increased through many generations to their present state. In the temples are centred all the hopes of the agriculturists for the prosperity of men, women, children, and cattle, of sowing and of reaping. A field that has suffered this damage is ruined, and has lost, together with all hopes, the confidence of the labourers. They believe their work useless when they are deprived of the gods who cause it to be fruitful. . . . So the audacity of this crew, so maliciously exercised in the country, leads to the most deplorable results. They say that they are making war on the temples; but the war resolves itself into robbery, in snatching away from the poor that which belongs to them—their provisions, the fruits of the soil, their nutriment; and when they leave, they take away, as if they were victors, the spoils of the vanquished. And this is not enough; they appropriate the land of any poor unfortunate creature, saying it is sacred ground, and thus many, under these false pretences, are deprived of their paternal heritage. It is these men who, pretending, as they say, to serve their

god with fasting, feast on the misery of others. And if the poor victims, going to the city, complain to the 'Shepherd' (so they call a man who is anything but good), and expose their sufferings, the 'Shepherd' praises the offenders and sends away the offended, saying that they must consider themselves lucky not to have suffered more. Nevertheless, O Emperor, even these unhappy ones are in the number of thy subjects, and are more useful than their oppressors, as the labourers are than those who do nothing. The first are like the bees, the others like the drones. As soon as they find out that some one possesses a little field of which they could despoil him, they immediately affirm that this one sacrifices to the gods and commits unlawful acts, and that they must treat him with violence, and here the 'moralists' (*οἱ σωφρονίσται*) enter upon the scene, as this is the name now given to thieves—if I do not say too little, for thieves seek to conceal and to deny that which they have dared to do, and feel offended when they are called thieves. But these, instead, boast of what they have done, and tell it to those who are ignorant of it, and affirm it to be worthy of praise. . . . And why, O Emperor, dost thou bring together so many troops, and prepare arms, and call thy generals to council, and send them where the need is greatest, and to these thou writest, and to those thou respondest? And why these new walls and all this summer work? To

what purpose, to what end is this to the cities and the country? To live without fear, to repose tranquilly, not to be disturbed by the threats of enemies, and to be certain that if any one comes suddenly upon us, they will be driven away, after having suffered more damage than they inflicted. And therefore, if while thou art keeping in check the enemy from without, certain of thy subjects maltreat others who are also thy subjects, and refuse to permit them to enjoy the happiness common to all, is it not true that they offend thy foresight, thy wisdom, and thy administration? Is it not true that by their actions they wage war against thy will?"[1]

In this appeal, in which sarcasm is united to invective and reasoning, Libanius appears truly eloquent and of great ability. And we recognise in the words of the orator an accent of truth, a

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, ii. 164, 2 sq. It is interesting to see that Libanius' judgment concerning the rapacious actions of the clergy and of the monks tallies fully with that of Zosimus, who says that "these under the pretext of giving all to the poor, have impoverished all" (Zos., *op. cit.*, 449). Who were the *σωφρονίσται* is clear from a law of Theodosius of the year 392. They are those "defensores" and "curiales" to whom the Emperor delegated the duty of watching that his interdict against all pagan worship was observed, and that the transgressors were referred to the judges. The discourse of Libanius had no effect; in fact, it had a result entirely opposite to that which he had expected. For while, from his discourse, it appears that, although the sacrifices were forbidden, the rite of incense was still permitted, by the law of 392, enacted after this discourse, it was explicitly forbidden, with the threat of confiscation of all places where the incense had been burnt—"omnia loca quæ turis consisterit vapore fumasse fisco nostro adsocianda censemus."

sentiment of righteous indignation, and the despairing cry of the vanquished, unjustly trampled upon. The passions of men never change. When they achieved victory, the Christians followed the example of those who had formerly been their masters, and they revived, in the name of a new principle, those proceedings and excesses which had previously been committed in the name of an opposite principle. And Libanius, being a persecuted pagan, energetically resists the arguments that the Christian persecutors presented in defence of their violence, *i.e.*, that by these means they forced the pagans to become converted. With such proceedings, says Libanius, one only obtains shadows of conversions. And then, exclaims Libanius, what advantage would accrue to the Christians, if the newly converted are only such in words and not in deeds? "In these matters it is necessary to persuade, not to constrain. Those who, failing to persuade, use violence, may believe that they have succeeded, but, in reality, their efforts have been useless."[1] The cause of this sad condition of things cannot, however, be attributed to Theodosius, for whom the able and prudent Libanius has only words of praise, but rather to his perfidious counsellors. By this Libanius seems to indicate Cinegius, the Prefect of the Orient, and the husband of Acantia, a matron who enjoyed the fame of sanctity. "This

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, ii. 178.

deceiver, a man impious, and an enemy of the gods, cruel, avaricious, and fatal to the earth that bore him, possessing an immense fortune which he misuses, is governed by his wife, to whom he defers in everything, and to whom all is subordinate. She, in her turn, is obliged to obey those who dictate to her, and make a show of virtue by clothing themselves in mourning garb, and even, for greater effect, in the stuff of which weavers make sacks. This herd of scoundrels deceive, cheat, act in an underhand manner, and tell falsehoods."[1] How curious this little sketch of a Prefect of the East, who is guided by his wife, who, in her turn, is ruled by monks! And how strange this diversity of judgment among men, depending entirely on the colour of the lens of passion through which the objects are viewed! Libanius sees perfidy and ridicule where a Gregory or an Athanasius would have seen the most perfect expression of holiness in intention and action!

But Theodosius, Libanius continues, has never issued any law that could sanction these excesses. "Thou hast never imposed this yoke on the human soul. And if thou believest that the worship of thy God is preferable to the worship of others, thou hast never declared that the worship of others than thine is impious, and that it is just to prohibit it." On the contrary, he

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, ii. 194, 10 sq.

calls to him as counsellors and boon-companions men notoriously devoted to the gods, and does not mistrust a friend because he has put his hope in these gods. And recalling Julian, whose image is never distant from his thoughts, Libanius exclaims: "Thou dost not persecute us, following the example of him who defeated the Persians by his arms, but, with these arms, never persecuted those of his subjects who were inimical to him." [1]

During Julian's sojourn in Antioch, an incident occurred that most particularly irritated him. Nothing was more repugnant to him than the veneration exhibited by the Christians for the sepulchres of their martyrs and illustrious men. This adoration of the dead, as he called it, offended his æsthetic sense as an ancient Greek, seemed to him absurd, and probably was odious to him because it was one of the most efficacious means of exalting souls to a high pitch of devotional fervour. Whenever he alluded to this "worship of the dead," his remarks were replete with sarcasm and contempt, and, even more than the destruction of the churches, he desired the disappearance or the abandonment of those tombs which had become sacred spots. Such was the tomb of the martyr Babylas, in the suburb of Daphne, near Antioch. This suburb was a place of delight on account of the beauty of the trees

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, ii. 202, 10 sq.

and flowers, for its view and its balmy breezes. The legend was that, in this spot, the nymph Daphne, when flying from Apollo, was changed into a bay tree, and this association, added to the suggestive beauty of the surroundings, made the grove of Daphne the resort of lovers. "He who walked through Daphne"—writes Sozomenes[1]—"without being accompanied by his sweetheart, was considered a stupid and uncouth individual." And in the midst of the grove was the finest-known statue of Apollo, and, hard by, a splendid marble temple dedicated to the god.

But when Gallus, the brother of Julian, was named Cæsar by Constantius, and invested with the government of the East, he established himself in Antioch, and, being a fervent Christian, was struck with the idea of destroying the prestige of this celebrated sanctuary of Hellenism, and, in order to succeed, he decided to build, opposite the temple of Apollo, a tabernacle wherein to place the relics of Babylas the Martyr. It appears that this aim was accomplished. The presence of the martyr's relics attracted to the perfumed grove of Daphne a crowd of Christian devotees, and put the lovers to flight, by diffusing a veil of sadness that obscured the brilliancy of the rays of Apollo.

The religious revolution having taken place,

[1] Sozom., *op. cit.*, 508. *ᾧ γὰρ ἡ διατριβὴ ἐκτὸς ἐρωμένης ἐν Δάφνῃ ἐτύγχανεν, ἠλίθιός τε καὶ ἄχαρις ἐδόκει.*

Julian, upon entering Antioch, wished to restore to its ancient splendour the temple and worship of Apollo, and this was impossible without removing to some other place the relics of the martyr, which defiled the sacred spot. And Julian ordered that they should be transported elsewhere. This order was the occasion of a great demonstration on the part of the Christians of Antioch, who, according to Sozomenes, accompanied, for forty stadia, the remains of the martyr, chanting psalms. Julian was greatly irritated by this demonstration, and had it not been for the wise counsel of Sallustius the Prefect, he would certainly have ordered reprisals. A few days later, however, a terrible fire destroyed the temple of Apollo. The Christians affirmed that a stroke of lightning, sent by God, had set the temple on fire, but Julian did not doubt, for an instant, that the Christians had committed the crime. In the *Misopogon* he recalls this fact with great bitterness, and compares the conduct of the Antiochians with that of other cities, in which they rebuilt the temples and destroyed the tombs of the atheists—namely, the Christians—even committing excesses which he deplored. The Antiochians, on the contrary, were destroying the altars as soon as they were rebuilt, and the kindness with which he admonished them had no effect. "In fact, when we ordered the corpse to be transported, those of you, who do not respect divine things, consigned the temple to those who were

indignant because of the transportation of the relics, and these, I know not whether secretly or not, lit this fire, which horrified strangers, gave pleasure to your people, and to which your senate was, and still remains, indifferent!"[1] And it was perhaps in consequence of this outrage that Julian gave orders, by a decree quoted by Sozomenes, to destroy two sanctuaries of martyrs which were being erected in Miletus, in the neighbourhood of the temple of Apollo.[2]

All these partial acts of violence, having simply an episodic character, and being the consequence of the reciprocal reprisals of two parties having almost the same strength, are not sufficient to alter the substantial fact of the religious tolerance that Julian believed to be the most efficacious instrument for the restoration he had intended to begin. We have already spoken of the intelligent and characteristic foresight displayed by Julian in recalling to their sees the bishops exiled by Constantius on account of theological dissensions. In Julian's letters we find the most curious and interesting particulars about this decision.

The ruling party at the court of Constantius were not the pure Arians, but rather the "opportunist" section of that party, which, while not admitting the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son, as maintained by Athanasius and the

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 466, 1 sq.

[2] Sozom., *op. cit.*, 511.

Council of Nicæa, did not affirm the distinction and subordination of the Son to the Father, as maintained by the pure Arians. Constantius, as we know, had accepted the so-called "homoian" formula, which declared that the Son is equal to the Father, according to the Scriptures, and forbade all analysis or determination of such a likeness. Constantius imposed this formula on the two Councils of Rimini and Seleucia, in the year 359, and then he exiled all the bishops who did not adhere to this decision, those of the Athanasian "extreme right" as well as those of the Arian "extreme left." Julian recalled them all without distinction. However, it is rather singular to observe the diversity of treatment of the two heroes of these great theological battles, the deacon Aëtius, who represented uncompromising Arianism, and the great Athanasius, the lawmaker of the Nicæan Council. To the former Julian sent the following short note:[1]—

"I recalled from exile all those, whoever they may be, who were exiled by Constantius on account of the foolishness of the Galileans. As to thee, not only do I recall thee, but, remembering our old acquaintance and intercourse, I invite thee to come and see me. To journey to my encampment thou mayst employ one of the state carriages and also an extra horse."

Who was this Aëtius whom the Emperor treats

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 522.

with such special favour? He was one of the Emperor's old acquaintances. We will first give a cursory glance at his character, and then compare him with the great Athanasius, and thus we shall have before us two characteristic portraits of the Christian type in the fourth century. Aëtius was a Syrian by birth, and in his youth devoted himself to the most different pursuits. First, he was a caster of metals, then a physician, and, little by little, he became known on account of the restlessness of his spirit and his singular ability in theological discussions, which were the intellectual passion of the age. If we are to believe Socrates, he was much better versed in the dialectics of Aristotle than in the knowledge of the Christian writers, and professed contempt for Clement and Origen.[1] Having been sent away from Antioch as a disturber of religious peace, Aëtius took up his abode in Cilicia, especially in Tarsus, where he became an intimate friend of the followers of the Lucianist ideas, and one of their most ardent apostles. Later on, when he returned to Antioch, he made a friend of the presbyter Leontius, who also belonged to the Lucianist school. Again he rushes to Cilicia, and travels to Alexandria to dispute with Gnostics and Manichæans; but when Leontius is made Bishop of Antioch, he returns there, and is consecrated deacon. He raises, however, such a storm of discord and dispute around the bishop,

[1] Socrat., *op. cit.*, 108.

that Leontius is obliged to keep him away from the sacred functions, though retaining him in his position of teacher. It appears that, in 351, he assisted at the Synod of Sirmium, where he fiercely opposed the Athanasians. These seem to have attempted to influence against him Gallus, Julian's brother, who, as we know, had been elected by Constantius to the office of Cæsar. But they did not succeed. On the contrary, Aëtius was so much master of the situation, and so thoroughly in the confidence of Gallus, that he often sent him as his confidential messenger to his brother Julian. From this arose the acquaintance between the prince and the Arian deacon, and it was the cause of the special favour which he accorded him when he ascended the throne. Gregory of Nyssa accuses Aëtius of having been the counsellor of Gallus in the murders of the Prefect Domitianus and the Quæstor Montius—horrible crimes, of which Gallus' death was the fatal consequence. But what faith can be placed in the affirmation of the Athanasian bishop, when Athanasians and Arians were both most unscrupulous in their mutual accusations? In 356, Aëtius went to Alexandria, the great centre of theological disputes, and took his stand as an uncompromising Arian of the "extreme left," and there spoke and wrote as one of the chiefs of a "young" Arianism. Recalled to Antioch by Bishop Eudoxius, he compromised him so much by his exasperating attitude, that the Semi-Arians easily

succeeded in influencing Constantius, and obtained the removal of the Bishop, and Aëtius was exiled to Phrygia. In 360, a year afterwards, Constantius having finally decided for the "homoian" formula, with which he imagined he could impose peace on those who were rending the Church with their discords, became even more severe in his treatment of Aëtius, who, deprived of his position of deacon by the Synod of Constantinople, was confined, by his orders, in Pisidia. When Julian came to the throne, Aëtius found his condition much improved. Recalled from exile, his deposition declared null, he, together with other Arians, was reconsecrated by a synod convened at Antioch. The fiery disputant probably died shortly afterwards, because we find no further trace of him.

We do not know if Aëtius accepted the invitation of the Emperor, who, at the same time as he asked him to visit him, denounced Christianity as a folly; but, if he accepted it, he did not succeed in making Julian favour Arianism. Julian was absolutely indifferent and impartial regarding the Christian sects, as to him they were all equally odious. And that the Arians were by no means an exception is proved by a letter, written on the occasion of tumults instigated in Edessa by the Arians, which is as just in its inspiration as it is merciless in its irony.

"To Hecebolius,—I treat all the Galileans with so much consideration and benevolence that

none of them have ever suffered violence, and I do not wish that any of them should be dragged to the temples, or forced to do anything contrary to their convictions. But those of the Arian Church, puffed up with pride on account of their wealth, have assailed the Valentinians, and committed disorders in Edessa that should not be permitted in any well-conducted city. A most admirable law, however, teaches the Christians that it is necessary to be poor to enter the kingdom of heaven; now to assist them, we command that all the property of the Church of the Edessians be confiscated and distributed to the soldiers, and the lands form part of our domain. Thus, being impoverished, they will become wise, and will obtain the hoped-for kingdom of heaven."[1]

We must, therefore, be convinced that Julian's courtesy towards Aëtius was entirely caused by a sentiment of personal sympathy, and that he had not the slightest tendency towards Arianism, for this would have been truly inexplicable, considering that, in the Semi-Arian court of Constantius, he had found his fiercest adversaries. Nevertheless, the personage who aroused in the Emperor the most implacable antipathy was to be found in the opposite faction, and it was none other than the great Athanasius, the founder of Catholic Orthodoxy. These two men, both highly

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 547.

gifted, the one representing the past and the other the future, the one reviving Hellenism, the other dominant Christianity, must have been incompatible with each other. The fact that Julian was so bitter against Athanasius, who was one of the victims of Constantius, proves that, notwithstanding his youth, he had a profound knowledge of men, and saw where the peril lay. He felt that the strength of Christianity was not in corrupt Arianism, notwithstanding the fact that it was the sovereign ruler of half the Christian world, but rather in the enthusiastic energy of the party who had uplifted the banner of the sacred mystery of the Trinity, and gathered around the imposing personality of the Bishop of Alexandria. If Athanasius had disappeared, Catholic Orthodoxy would never have been founded, and Christianity would never have had that organisation which has caused it to lose its original character, but which was necessary, in order to keep it alive. To fully appreciate the importance of the duel between Julian and Athanasius, it is necessary to study the personality of the latter.

No existence was more tempestuous or more heroic than that of Athanasius. A novelist of vivid imagination, a Sienkiewicz, might weave around him an epic tale. There is nothing that gives so clear an idea of the atmosphere of the fourth century as a study of this great personality and of his adventurous career. The man was

truly great, a born ruler, an inflexible adversary, a mighty soul, capable of the highest flights. There is undoubtedly a great analogy between Athanasius and Ambrose. But Ambrose's position was much less dangerous and difficult than that of Athanasius. Except during the regency of Justina, the authority of Ambrose was never disputed, but, even then, the influence of the bishop was so much stronger than that of the empress as to leave no question as to the final victory. With the exception of this passing encounter, the influence of Ambrose was absolute, and, in his war against Arianism, he had at his disposal the aid of the Imperial power. Gratianus and Theodosius were two instruments in his hands, with which he succeeded in establishing Catholic Orthodoxy as the religion of state. The life of Athanasius, on the contrary, was one of incessant and gigantic struggles. He had the empire against him. If we except Constantine at the moment of the Council of Nicæa, and the transient reign of Jovian, he was persecuted by all the emperors who reigned on the throne of Constantinople during his life—Constantius, Julian, and Valens.

Born in the last years of the third century, Athanasius passed the first years of his youth in Alexandria, by the side of Bishop Alexander, and to his influence are due the first dissensions between the bishop and the presbyter Arius, which

afterwards led to the great civil war of Early Christianity. Even at the Council of Nicæa, Athanasius was an imposing figure, and Arianism recognised in him the most powerful of its enemies. At Alexander's death he was elected, in 328, Bishop of Alexandria. But the opposition of his Arian clergy was so energetic, and the accusations against the newly-elected bishop so numerous, that Constantine, seeing the failure of his Orthodox policy, and beginning to lean towards Arianism, called the accused to justify himself, first before him, at Nicomedia, and, afterwards, when the accusations were renewed, before a Council convened at Cæsaræa in 334. Athanasius, however, delayed presenting himself, and managed privately to persuade Constantine of his innocence and to regain his favour. But his enemies were bent on his ruin. Eusebius of Nicomedia, the future educator of Julian, who lived near the Emperor, persuaded him to convoke another synod, in 335, at Tyre, which sat in judgment on the Bishop of Alexandria. He presented himself at the Council with a powerful following of fifty bishops, but being convinced that his condemnation was a foregone conclusion, he did not wait for the decree of destitution, and embarked for Constantinople, trusting to his personal influence on the mind of Constantine. Nor was he in the wrong; for the Emperor, placed between the Council and Athanasius, inclined more towards

the latter. And now Eusebius made another accusation, and this time of a non-theological nature, and so grave as to make a profound impression upon the mind of the Emperor: he accused Athanasius of having threatened to stop the annual provision of grain that was usually sent from Alexandria to Constantinople. Constantine refused to hold any further communication with Athanasius, and immediately exiled him to Trèves, in Germany, where he received a most courteous reception from the Emperor's son, and found an ardent upholder of his theological opinions in Bishop Maximinus.

Constantine having died in 337, Athanasius returned in triumph to Alexandria, and reassumed his office. This was the signal for a renewal of the trouble. Athanasius, who was certainly not a tolerant man, deposed from their ecclesiastical offices all those who had been his adversaries, and put in their places his own friends, thereby exciting, more and more, the anger of the Arians. On the throne of Constantinople sat Constantius, a Semi-Arian who only saw with the eyes of Eusebius. He, therefore, sent to Alexandria a new bishop, Gregory, surrounded by a strong military escort, so as to overcome by force any resistance which might be encountered. Gregory's arrival was the cause of insurrections and scenes of violence. Athanasius, recognising that all resistance was useless, in March 340, went into exile for the second time, and took up his abode in Rome

with Bishop Julius. In the West, Athanasius found friends and supporters, among whom the most important were the Emperor Constans, who, unlike his brother Constantius, was on the side of Orthodoxy. In the next five years, the indefatigable Athanasius devoted himself, under the protection of the Emperor, to the defence and glory of the faith which he professed with a conviction that was truly heroic. In Milan, in Gaul, at Aquileia, he was the religious lawgiver. In the meanwhile, even in the East, circumstances were becoming favourable to him. Constantius considering it better policy not to have any open rupture with his brother, affected to become more friendly in his opinions, so that, when Bishop Gregory died in 345, Athanasius was allowed to present himself before Constantius in Antioch, and even to be reinstated by him in his see of Alexandria. In 346 he re-entered Alexandria amidst the rejoicings of the people. But the peace was of short duration. Constans dying in 350, Constantius no longer felt any necessity for concealing his partiality for Arianism. As a consequence, the war against Athanasius was renewed, and he was accused of being the disturber of the peace of the Church. Various attempts to get possession of the person of the Bishop were unsuccessful, owing to the threatening attitude of the population of Alexandria. But, finally, on the night of February the 9th, 356, the governor, Syrianus, with a strong force of

soldiers, succeeded in effecting an entrance into the church, where the Bishop was celebrating divine service. A scene of riot and bloodshed ensued, during which Athanasius disappeared. The victorious Arians regained all the offices of which they had been deprived, and George, with whose unfortunate end we are already acquainted, was appointed to the episcopal see.

During this third exile, which lasted from 356 to 361, Athanasius lived in the hermitages of Upper Egypt, returning secretly, from time to time, to Alexandria, and kept up the spirits of his party by the writings which he composed in his fruitful solitude. If, however, we put faith in Sozomenes, the fiery Bishop passed this period of renewed persecution more pleasantly. The historian narrates that Athanasius remained in Alexandria concealed in the home of a virgin of singular beauty of a beauty unrivalled by that of any woman in Alexandria. But we shall reproduce the words of Sozomenes, which offer us a peculiar *ragout* of sanctity and romance, and which to us appear most heterogeneous, though no doubt this account proved very tasty to the literary palates of the fourth century. "The virgin appeared as a marvel to all who saw her, but those who wished to keep their reputation for temperance and wisdom fled from her, for fear that they might be suspected. Because she was in the flower of her youth, and of supreme dignity and modesty. . . . Now,

Athanasius, induced to save himself by a divine vision, took refuge with this virgin. And when I investigate this event, I seem to see in it the hand of God, who, not wishing that the friends of Athanasius should suffer harm, if ever any one should question them concerning him, or force them to take oath, led him to conceal himself near one whose excessive beauty would not permit the suspicion that a priest could be found near her.[1] She received him with courage, and kept him in safety by her prudence, and was such a faithful guardian and thoughtful handmaiden that she even washed his feet, prepared his food, and all other things that are demanded by the necessities of nature.[2] She also procured from others the books that were necessary to him. And although this lasted for a very long time, none of the citizens of Alexandria were aware of it."[3]

Now, whether Athanasius found refuge in the midst of the desert, or remained concealed in the innermost recesses of the virginal home of this beautiful maiden, his actions and his presence were spiritually felt in the emotional atmosphere of Alexandria, so that Bishop George, who we know was a headstrong man, had, by no means, a quiet life, and was at every moment exposed to the violence of a population incensed against

[1] *ἧς τὸ μὲν κάλλος ὀυ συνεχώρει ὑπονοεῖσθαι ἐνθάδε διάγειν τὸν ἱερέα.*
[2] *καὶ ὅσα φύσις ὑπομένειν βιάζεται ἐν ταῖς κατεπειγούσαις χρείαις.*
[3] Sozom., *op. cit.*, 489.

him, so that as soon as Julian ascended the throne, their long-pent-up fury burst forth in all its force, and led them to that terrible act which the Athanasians regarded with indifference, and most probably connived at.

As soon as Julian's decision was published, authorising those bishops who had been exiled by his Arian predecessor to return home, Athanasius not only re-entered Alexandria, but, without any hesitation, re-occupied the episcopal throne, and resumed, with renewed energy, his work of propagandism and opposition.

Now, the conduct of Athanasius interfered with Julian's policy, as he wished to place the Christian parties on a footing of equality and reciprocal tolerance, expecting that, by this means, they would mutually weaken each other. But nothing was further from his thoughts than to assist Orthodoxy in overcoming Arianism, and, therefore, there was no one more suspected and more odious to him than the over-zealous Athanasius. Julian was, for this reason, very much incensed at the brilliant reappearance of the Bishop of Alexandria, and felt that he could not tolerate him. He foresaw, in Athanasius, an enemy much more powerful than himself, and had an intuition that he would render fruitless the task to which he had dedicated his life, so he decided to silence him at once. He began his persecution under the pretence that Athanasius had transgressed the law. As it was, the Emperor,

in his edict, had conceded to the exiled Christians the right of returning to their homes, but nothing had been said about permitting them to re-assume the government of their respective churches. Athanasius, notwithstanding this, did not hesitate an instant to take the place of the murdered George. Julian at once sent the following decree to the Alexandrians: "A man exiled by so many decrees, by so many emperors, should certainly have awaited a special authorisation before re-entering the country, and should not immediately offend the laws, by his audacity and folly, as if they seemed to have no importance to him. We have allowed the Galileans exiled by Constantius to return to their homes, but not to their churches. And now I hear that this most audacious Athanasius, puffed up by his habitual impudence, has resumed that which they call the episcopal throne, which is most decidedly disagreeable to the pious people of Alexandria. We, therefore, order him to leave the city the very day on which he receives this letter, and this he may consider as a proof of our leniency. But if he remain, we will condemn him to greater and more vexatious chastisements."[1] It appears that Athanasius, notwithstanding this threat, remained in the city, and furthermore, not content with fighting the Arians, carried on a very successful propaganda among the pagans, making many converts to Christianity, especially among the women.

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 514.

Julian, infuriated at this, sends to Ædychius, the Governor of Egypt, the following note :—

"If thou didst not want to write to me on other subjects, thou shouldst at least have informed me about Athanasius, that enemy of the gods, as thou wast well aware of what I had wisely decided some time ago. I swear by the mighty Serapis that if, before the Kalends of December, this enemy of the gods, Athanasius, has not left, not only the city, but also Egypt, I will impose on the province administered by thee the fine of one hundred pounds in gold. Thou knowest how slow I am to condemn, but also that I am much slower in pardoning, once that I have condemned."

It appears that thus far the decree was dictated by Julian to a secretary. But suddenly overcome by an outburst of indignation, he seizes a stilus and writes: "With my own hand.—To me it is a great grief to be disobeyed. By all the gods, nothing could give me more pleasure than that thou shouldst expel from every corner of Egypt, Athanasius, that criminal who has dared, during my reign, to baptize Greek wives of illustrious citizens. He must be persecuted." [1]

In his first decree to the Alexandrians, the Emperor had commanded Athanasius to be exiled from the city. This is now no longer sufficient, he must be exiled from the whole of Egypt. And this new order, transmitted to the Governor in that

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 484.

note composed of a few angry phrases, is afterwards broadly explained in the following proclamation to the inhabitants of Alexandria :—

"JULIAN TO THE ALEXANDRIANS

"Even admitting that your founder would have been one of those who, by disobeying the paternal law, had the merited punishment, and preferred to live illegally and to introduce a revelation and a new doctrine, you would not have the right to demand of me Athanasius. But having had, instead, as your founder, Alexander, and, as your protector, the god Serapis, together with Isis, the virgin Queen of Egypt . . . [here the text is wanting] . . . you do not wish the welfare of the city ; you are only the infected part of it, who dare to appropriate to yourselves its name.

"I should be ashamed, by the gods, O Alexandrians, if only one of you confessed to being a Galilean. The forefathers of the Jews were the slaves of the Egyptians. And now you, O Alexandrians, after having subjected the Egyptians (since your founder conquered Egypt), you offer to those who scorn your country's laws, to those who, in olden times, you kept in chains, your voluntary servitude. Neither do you remember your ancient glory and prosperity, when all Egypt was united in the worship of the gods, and enjoyed every blessing. But those who

introduced among you this new revelation, what advantage, tell me, have they promoted in your city? Your founder, Alexander of Macedonia, was a pious man, who, by Jupiter, did not in any way resemble them, nor even the Jews, who are much more worthy than they are. The successors of the founder, the Ptolemies, did they not paternally treat your city as a favourite daughter? Did they make the town prosper with the sermons of Jesus, or were the teachings of those most wicked Galileans the means of procuring the opulence it now enjoys? Finally, when we Romans became masters of the city, after expelling the Ptolemies, who governed unwisely, Augustus, presenting himself before you, said to the citizens: 'Inhabitants of Alexandria, I hold the city guiltless of what has happened, out of respect for the great god Serapis.' . . .

"Of all the favours particularly bestowed on your city by the gods of Olympus I will say nothing, not wishing to go into particulars. But is it possible that you can ignore the favours that the gods bestow every day, not on a few men, nor even one race or city, but on the entire world? Is it possible that you alone are not aware of the rays that emanate from the sun? Do you not know that spring and winter proceed from him? and that from him all animals and plants derive their life? Do you not realise for how many benefits you are indebted to the moon, who was

born from him, and who represents him in everything? And you dare not to bow down before these gods? And you believe that for you is necessary the 'Logos' of God, that Jesus, whom neither you nor your fathers have ever seen? And that sun whom all the human race from all eternity contemplate and venerate, and who, when venerated, is beneficent, I say, the great sun-god, the living and animated and rational and active image of the intellectual All . . ." Here the text is interrupted, and we lose the close of this enthusiastic hymn. But later it continues :—

" . . . But you will not relinquish the right path if you listen to me, who, by the help of the gods, have followed it since my twentieth year, that is, for twelve years.

"If you would be willing to be persuaded by me, it will afford you great happiness. If you wish to remain faithful to the foolishness and the teachings of evil-minded men, arrange things among yourselves, but do not ask me for Athanasius. There are already too many of his disciples ready to tickle your ears, if you enjoy, or are in need of, impious words. Would that the wickedness of these impious teachings were limited to Athanasius alone! You have an abundance of able persons, and there is no difficulty in choosing. Any one that you may pick out in the crowd, as far as the teaching of the Scriptures is concerned, would not be inferior to him whom you desire.

And if you prefer Athanasius for some other quality (they tell me that the man is a great intriguer), and because of this, make your petition to me, know ye that it is precisely for this reason that I have banished him from the city, because the man who wishes to interfere in everything is by nature unfit to govern, and so much the more so when he is not even a man, but a miserable apology for one, as your great teacher, who always imagines that his life is in danger, and who is always the cause of continual disorder. Therefore, to prevent any disturbance from taking place, we first decreed that he should be banished from the city, and now from the whole of Egypt.

"This order be communicated to our citizens of Alexandria!"[1]

Athanasius opposed no resistance to the order of Julian. This man of great experience and shrewdness, who had passed through so many other perils and adventures, understood the folly of Julian's attempt. When on the point of leaving Alexandria, he said to the weeping multitude who surrounded him: "Be of good heart, this is only a passing cloud, and will soon disappear."[2] A wonderful prophecy, pronounced when Julian was at the apogee of his youth and power, which reveals, by the calm and serene confidence of

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 556.
[2] Socrat., *op. cit.*, 152.—Sozom., *op. cit.*, 500.

its words, the dignity and greatness of mind of this illustrious man, much more efficaciously than the hyperbolical invectives of a Gregory or a Cyril.

Julian's proclamation is singularly valuable and interesting, as it enables us to penetrate into his ideas and intentions. It certainly possesses a certain amount of polemical skill, by means of which the writer seeks to shame the Alexandrians who are willing to submit to the yoke of the descendants of those Hebrews whom they anciently had as their slaves. Julian wonders how it is possible that the Alexandrians have fallen into such a state of intellectual impotence, that they seriously take into consideration a figure, like that of Jesus, who is absolutely devoid of all historical importance, and whom they and their fathers have never seen, while they daily contemplate the sun —the origin of life, and the visible representation of the supreme God! As Julian was absolutely invulnerable to all the fascinations that emanated from the Gospel, to him the story of Jesus was only a fable composed of elements unskilfully woven together, and essentially irrational. He was thus astonished that any one could consider it in a different light. But, notwithstanding his convictions, which he reveals in his Hymn to the Sun with words so replete with feeling and sincerity, Julian allows nothing to dissuade him from his predetermined tolerance. He

deplores the blindness of the Alexandrians, and, because of his personal antipathy, does not wish that Athanasius should exercise any influence over them. But he does not prevent the Christians of Alexandria from being instructed in their doctrine, and following the many masters placed at their disposal. It seems to him inconceivable and most unfortunate that the Alexandrians could experience the desire of listening to the teachings of the Christians, but, if such be the case, they are free to do so, only they are forbidden to listen to Athanasius. This fierce antipathy that Julian cherishes against the Bishop of Alexandria speaks highly in favour of the latter, and is an evident proof of the sterling merits of this truly great personality. In Julian there certainly can be detected the anger of the partisan who sees before him an enemy much stronger than himself, whom he cannot succeed in overcoming. The murder of Bishop George, which might have been considered as an indication that the Alexandrians wished to return to Hellenism, had only served to reinstate Athanasius in his ancient position, therefore rendering his Christian propaganda more efficacious. Thus it was only natural and human that Julian, irritated by this condition of affairs, should depart for a while from his customary moderation. But by giving to his anger the character of a personal contest, he demonstrated that neither failure nor disappointment could

induce him to be guilty of a systematic and general persecution.

Julian's argument in this proclamation to the Alexandrians gives us a clear insight into his mind. Ancient civilisation, with all its glory, its traditions and its memories, appears to him a heritage so precious that he cannot comprehend how they can welcome a doctrine that does not recognise it, has an origin extraneous to it, and, if victorious, would end by overturning and destroying it. But how? Will tradition be interrupted and history closed? Will all the glories of the past be effaced for ever, and cancelled by the intrusion of a foreign element? But who would dare to compare the value of this foreign element with the grandeur of the historical memories of the nation? And Julian, to express his contempt for the humble origin of the new doctrine, only speaks of the Christians as Galileans. Is it possible that, from a small, unknown, barbarous corner of the Empire, there should arise a force capable of combating and vanquishing the most brilliant and powerful traditions? Is it possible that the Galileans were wiser and stronger than the Greeks? Is it possible that the Alexandrians should forget Alexander, the Ptolemies, and the Romans, and Serapis and Isis—in truth, all that structure of men, religion, laws and history, on which was erected their civilisation, their wealth, and their prosperity? Why should they abandon

all these cherished, grand, and glorious memories to follow the call of Jesus?—of a man, born in Galilee, an absolute stranger to the Greek and Roman world, untutored and unknown, of whom there existed only uncertain and contradictory reports—a man so weak and nerveless that he allowed himself to be ignominiously killed? Is not this a supreme folly?

This argument of Julian might have appealed to those who did not believe in Christianity, but had not the slightest importance for those who believed. Belief is not a thing of reason, convenience, or opportunity. Faith is born from the spontaneous impulse of the human soul which feels the necessity of satisfying certain aspirations, and, when born, no reason in the world is able to extinguish it. All Julian's reminders and reminiscences of a glorious past were vain and ineffectual, as they failed to touch the soul that had experienced the charm of Christianity, and, being attracted by other ideals, hastened towards that source where they could be realised. Then, also, it was too late. If a discourse such as Julian's had been pronounced two centuries earlier by a Marcus Aurelius, when paganism flourished in all its splendour, and Christianity was just born, it might have been understood, and have exercised a certain influence. But in the middle of the fourth century, when Christianity had been officially recognised, and ruled over half the world, this dis-

course must have had the same results as that of a faint voice coming from a long distance, and powerless to awaken an echo in the souls of those who heard it.

In his duel with Athanasius, Julian's conduct, though in part excusable, lacked moderation, and assumed the aspect of a personal persecution. Another case in which Julian allowed his hate to betray him into an injustice is that of the Bishop of Bostra. We know that one of Julian's first acts was to recall all those bishops, exiled by Constantius, who, for the most part, belonged to the Athanasian party. And we have also observed that, underlying this decree, which certainly was in itself an act of tolerance, there was probably the desire and the hope that, when the heads of the parties into which Christianity was divided came into contact, their discord would kindle a new flame which would consume the power of the Church. The previsions of this acute emperor were soon verified. The return of the exiles was the signal for the renewal of the storm. Now Julian, to further his aims, wished to profit by it. In his war against Christianity, his first object was to destroy the influence of the bishops. Once these were conquered, it would be easier to master the people. And these internal discords suggested to him an artifice, of which his letter to the citizens

of Bostra furnishes a singular example. The Emperor addresses himself to the Christian population of that city, to assure them that he will not hold them responsible for the disorders that have taken place there. It is the bishops who are responsible, because they inflame the souls of the deceived and ignorant. But they must not believe that the bishops are exclusively influenced by religious zeal. Quite the contrary. If it were so, they would be pleased with the clemency and impartiality exercised by Julian, who has restored peace to the Church. But the truth is that this clemency prevented them and the rest of the higher clergy from making bad use of their positions, and enriching themselves by appropriating that which belonged to their rivals. The Christian congregations should open their eyes, and not fall into the traps that the bishops had set for them, making them the instruments of their base covetousness. But the artifice of the Imperial disputant could hardly apply to Titus, the Bishop of Bostra, who used all his influence to make peace, and who, honestly believing that he had acted in a manner to entitle him to Julian's approbation, and, notwithstanding the fact that the Christians constituted the majority of the population, had, by means of his exhortations, prevented them from doing harm to any one. This imprudent phrase gave the Emperor an opportunity of attempting, with perfidious skill, to ruin the poor

Bishop. He quotes in his letter this isolated phrase, and pretends to infer from it that the Bishop claimed all the merit of having kept peace among the citizens of Bostra, who otherwise would have caused riots, and who unwillingly obeyed his injunctions. Julian concludes by saying that Titus is a calumniator, and that the people of Bostra must expel him from the city.

But we will reproduce in its entirety this curious letter, of which we have already[1] noted the exhortations to religious tolerance.

"To the Inhabitants of Bostra

"I believed that the chiefs of the Galileans should feel a greater thankfulness to me than to him who preceded me in the government of the Empire. For while he reigned many of them were exiled, persecuted, and imprisoned, and whole multitudes of so-called heretics were murdered, so that, in Samosata, Cyzicus, in Paphlagonia, Bithynia, and Galatia, and many other places, entire villages were destroyed from their foundations. Now, under my rule, just the opposite has happened. The exiled have been recalled, and, by means of a law, those whose goods had been confiscated, received them back again. However, they have arrived at such a pitch of fury and stupidity, that from the moment they were no

[1] See pp. 337–8.

longer allowed to tyrannise, nor, to continue the strife among themselves, and oppressed the worshippers of the gods, inflamed with anger, they begin to hurl stones, and dare to stir up the rabble, and make riots, impious in their actions towards the gods and rebellious to our decrees, notwithstanding their extreme benevolence. We do not permit any one against their will to be dragged to the altars, and we openly declare that if any one desires to participate in our rites and libations, they must first purify themselves and supplicate the punishing divinities. It would be thus impossible for us to permit any of those unbelievers, because they desire or pretend to be present at our sacred rites, before they have purified their souls with prayers to the gods, and their bodies by lustration, according to the law.

"Now, it is manifest that the crowd, deceived by the clergy, break out in riots just because the clergy are permitted to act with impunity. In fact, for those who exercised tyranny, it is not sufficient that they are not obliged to pay the penalty of the evil that they have done, but, desiring to re-acquire the old power, now that the law no longer permits them to be judges, to write wills, to appropriate the inheritance of others and to take all for themselves, they encourage every kind of disorder, and by throwing, if I may so say, fuel on the fire, they add greater ills to the ancient troubles, and drag on the

multitude to discord. I have, therefore, decided to proclaim, and render manifest to all by means of this decree, the duty of not assisting the clergy in causing riots, and not permitting themselves to be persuaded to throw stones and disobey the magistrates. Otherwise, all are allowed to assemble together as often as they wish, and to make such prayers as they think fit. But they must not let themselves be led into disorderly actions, unless they wish to be punished.

"I believe it opportune to make this declaration, and especially to the citizens of Bostra, because Bishop Titus and the priests around him, in a memorial they have sent me, accuse the population of being inclined to disorder, in spite of their exhortations. Here is the phrase of the memorial which I quote in this my decree :—'Although the Christians equal the Greeks in numbers, restrained by our exhortations, they will in no way disturb any one.'—So the Bishop speaks of you. You see he says your good conduct is not the fruit of your inclination, but is rather due to the power of his exhortations. Therefore you should, of your own free will, banish him from your city as your accuser, and come to an agreement among yourselves, so that there should be neither disputes nor violence." [1]

Julian finishes his letter with those admonitions to mutual tolerance which we have already

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 559 sq.—Sozom., *op. cit.*, 501.

heard (pp. 337, 338). But the wisdom of this advice does not excuse Julian's conduct towards Titus, which was yet more grave and reprehensible than his treatment of Athanasius. With the latter there was open war, and, from Julian's point of view, war was justifiable. But the ruse he used against the Bishop of Bostra is so hypocritical that it leaves a stain on Julian's character. In this letter the description of the habits of the Christian clergy is intensely interesting and instructive; evidently they had become completely corrupted by the high position they had attained. The thirst for rapidly acquired wealth, the thirst for power, and the tendency to intrigue was so clear and universal that the pagan disputant could derive from it argument, support, and justification in the war he was waging against Christianity. Julian very ably puts the question. "You see," he says, "I have rendered the Church of the Galileans incontestable services. I have recalled the exiled, have given back the property that had been confiscated, and sought to put an end to the violence by which it was rent asunder. And, instead of finding gratitude, I have reaped the result of being hated by all, without distinction, and more than my predecessor, who fiercely persecuted one half of the Church for the benefit of the other. But this arises from the fact that peace and reciprocal respect are not desired by the heads of the Church, as they only care for impunity in their abuse of power and deceit. My

system of government, which imposes order and toleration of opinions and beliefs, and absolute obedience to the laws, is distasteful to those who thus find their hands tied, and they would prefer arbitrary power and violence, because, with these, they would be able to secure their own interests." Scarcely sixty years had passed since the persecution of Diocletian, when Christianity, bleeding and broken, gathered to its bosom all the heroism of which human nature was capable, and behold! a few decades of security and prosperity had reduced it to an institution so full of vices, so given to fraud, and so intensely dominated by the lust for wealth and power, as to permit those who opposed it to assume the character of defenders of the weak and vindicators of outraged morality. Even admitting that, in Julian's words, we perceive a malevolent intention, these words are undoubtedly based upon the truth. If this had not been so, the argument of the disputant would have proved wholly inefficacious. The divine ideals of primitive Christianity, by adapting themselves to material forms, were miserably dissipated, and Christianity had become inoculated with those same vices which it was its mission to extirpate.

I think that I have clearly demonstrated, by the assistance of documentary evidence, that Julian's persecutions only existed in the imagination of those authors who opposed him, or were, at least,

acts of defence, not always, it is true, blameless and sincere, and sometimes carried to excess by the untimely zeal of certain prefects. But there is one of Julian's acts, one that is authentic, that aroused the greatest indignation on the part of his Christian contemporaries, and is even now considered by many historians to be the proof of the aggressive intolerance of the Imperial apostate. This act is the promulgation of the law by which he sought to forbid Christians teaching Greek literature in the public schools. The immense importance attributed to this act, which, after all, had only an administrative character, proves how little they must have been preoccupied by the supposed violence of the new persecutor. But, at all events, Julian's action manifests a direction of thought and a tendency that had arisen for the first time in the ancient world, and it is this same that afterwards developed into literary censure. We have already seen how Julian advised his priests not to read Epicurus. Now, by this decree, he wishes to prevent the sacred books of polytheism from being read and explained by masters, according to his ideas, incapable of comprehending their inspiration and significance.

But just because Julian's act was symptomatic of a new attitude of the human mind, we must examine it in its origin and in its essence, and seek to form a precise judgment concerning it, based on the objective knowledge of the con-

ditions in the midst of which it appeared. And, first of all, we should consider the position that religion had taken in the Græco-Roman society of the fourth century, after the promulgation of the Edict of Constantine.

The edict with which Constantine and his colleague Licinius recognised the legal existence of Christianity, published in Milan in the year 313, is a document that would reflect the greatest honour on the philosophical spirit of the Emperor, if his subsequent actions had not demonstrated that this decree was not the effect of careful reflection, but simply a manœuvre of political "opportunism."

The Roman Empire, like all the other states of the ancient world, had a national religion, whose acts were the sanction and consecration of its existence. But polytheism, just because it affirmed the multiplicity of the gods, did not object to admit, side by side with the national gods, foreign divinities, only requiring that, in their external acts of worship, they conformed to those rules which were necessarily recognised by the authorities of the State. Christianity was opposed, just because it forbade its adherents to perform these acts, and, therefore, appeared as an institution politically revolutionary. Now, that which is most singular and original in Constantine's decree is not the proclamation of the principle of tolerance for all religions, but the explicit, declared, and absolute abandonment of any State religion.

The State, according to Constantine, should be satisfied with pure theism—a theism so rational as to be absolutely indifferent as to the modality of the worship that men rendered to God. And it is just because Constantine, in the interest of the empire and the Emperor, wished this God to be prayed to by all men, that the law affirmed the complete liberty of worship, and abandoned all claims to the fulfilment of official and determined rites. Whatever the external forms might be, all prayers are acceptable to God. The State has no right to prefer or choose for its own one form rather than another. The supreme importance to the State and the Emperor is not the manner in which men pray, but that they actually do pray. Every link between the State and a determined religion is entirely severed. Constantine's decree is evidently inspired by the principle of "*libera Chiesa in libero stato.*" Constantine writes to the governors of the provinces:—"We give to the Christian and to all others free choice of following that worship which they prefer, so that the divinity who is in heaven may be propitious to us and to all those under our rule. By a wise and most just process of reasoning, we are induced to decree that no one shall be refused the right of following the doctrine and worship of the Christians; we desire that every one should be free to follow the religion that seems to him most suitable, so that the divinity may,

with his usual benevolence, assist us in all our undertakings. . . . We" — continues the Emperor, addressing himself to each individual governor — "warmly recommend our decree to thy especial attention, so that thou mayst comprehend that it is our desire to give to the Christians absolute freedom to follow their worship. But if such absolute freedom be given by us to them, thou must see that the same liberty must be given to all others who wish to participate in the acts of their particular religion. It is the manifest sign of the peace of our times that every one is free to select and worship the divinity whom he prefers. And it is on account of this that we desire that the exercise of any special worship or any religion should not suffer the slightest impediment. . . . Following this course, we shall obtain that divine providence, which has on so many occasions been favourable to us, will continue to be always and unchangeably propitious."[1]

Constantine's decree and the principle that inspired it is one of the most rational acts that ever emanated from a legislative authority; we may almost say that the legislation of all times and all nations has never gone further. We shall never know whence Constantine received the inspiration of his remarkable decree, which, while permitting Christianity the right to live and to

[1] Euseb., *op. cit.*, 375.

exercise its particular worship, at the same time refused it the sanction of that which constituted its essential principle—the sanction of an absolute and dogmatic truth. But between the pagans true to the idolatry and superstitions of paganism, and the Christians, who with their metaphysical religion were about to create a new idolatry and a new superstition, there must possibly have existed, if we rightly interpret the words of Ammianus Marcellinus, a party fighting under the banner of a rationally theistic Christianity. Ridiculing the theological craze of Constantius, our historian says that he mistook a stupid superstition for the Christian religion "*absolutam et simplicem.*"[1] These two epithets, which, on the lips of a polytheist, sounded like praise, appeared to refer to a Christianity without dogmas and without rites, tolerant in its purely theistic affirmation—a "Stoic" Christianity, of which we find the first expression in the "Octavius" of Minucius Felix. Constantine's decree was probably conceived in this atmosphere of rational religion, and therefore opposed to the invasion of dogmatism. But the readiness with which Constantine abandoned this serene and enlightened rationalism proved that the decree was not the manifestation of a conviction formed in his conscience, but the effect of the counsel of others. Therefore, as soon as it occurred to Constantine that Christianity might, in

[1] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, i. 263.

his hands, become a powerful instrument, he hastened to supersede his admirable decree, and, descending from the lofty position of rational theism, conferred on Christianity, now Orthodox and now Arian, the importance of a real and absolute State religion, and Christianity, just because it owed its efficacy to a dogmatic truth, rather than to a political necessity, excluded and persecuted all other religions. Constantine had written: "It does not matter in what manner men pray, so long as they do pray." In the Christianity which he had recognised, the manner became immediately the condition of the prayer. He who did not pray in the prescribed manner must not pray at all. The sons of Constantine hastened this movement, which received its solemn and final sanction from Theodosius.

Now Julian, with all the toleration he had declared in religious matters, could not consider the subject from Constantine's point of view, because he also desired a religion of State, and such for him was paganism, to which he gave a dogmatic value, and in this consisted the novelty of his attempt. Julian was a man of his time, and he could not be expected to revive a decree which was only a theoretic declaration of principles, and not a practically applied rule of conduct. Julian attempted to oppose to Christianity, recognised as a religion essentially dogmatic, another religion that would not be less so. From this arose the

necessity of preventing a diffusion of what to him was an error, and, above all, when this error was to be propagated by means furnished by the State. The School Law that he promulgated was inspired by this trend of ideas, and was one of the instruments that he wished to use in the religious conflict. We shall now examine it attentively, and decide, if, considering the convictions by which he was prompted, we can really accuse him of having been intolerant and tyrannical.

In order clearly to define the terms of this dispute, we shall begin by reproducing literally the famous law which was promulgated by Julian in the year 362, a few months before he left Constantinople for Antioch to prepare for that Persian expedition in which he was to perish heroically. The law is as follows:—

"It is necessary that the masters of the schools should be most perfect, first in their morals, and then in their eloquence. Now, as it is impossible for me to be present in every city, I order that those who wish to be teachers must not suddenly and without preparation assume that office—*non repente nec temere prosiliat ad hoc munus*—but, after being approved by the authority of the Government, they shall obtain a decree of the 'Curiales' [we should say nowadays the Town Council], which must not fail to meet the approbation of the best citizens. This decree

must afterwards be referred to me, for examination, so that the one elected should present himself to the school of the city deserving, because of our judgment, a higher title of honour—*hoc decretum ad me tractandum refertur ut altiore quodam honore nostro judicio studiis civitatum accedat.*"

We must, first of all, remark that Julian's law referred exclusively to the municipal schools, which were none other than the public schools. In the fourth century, official teaching was almost entirely assigned to the cities, and they maintained the schools at their expense, nominating the teachers by means of the Council. Of this we have numberless proofs,[1] but it is fully demonstrated in the "Autobiography" of Libanius, in which the famous Professor of Rhetoric narrates his continual peregrinations between the schools of Constantinople, Nicomedia, and Antioch, and his Discourses, in which he speaks so frequently of the disputes incessantly arising between the city authorities and the teachers, to whom these authorities were always in arrears with their stipends—a condition of affairs by no means peculiar to the fourth century. Furthermore, every one knows that the high-minded and intelligent youth who afterwards was known as St. Augustine, came to Milan, just because the city authorities having to elect a Professor of Rhetoric, and not finding any one in the city whom they considered worthy to fill the position, addressed

[1] Sievers, *Das Leben des Libanius.*—Boissier, *La Fin du Paganisme.*

themselves to Symmachus, the Prefect of Rome, "ut illi civitati rhetoricæ magister provideretur," and Symmachus sent them Augustine.

However, in the fourth century, there did not exist those subtle distinctions of competency that so greatly complicate the organism of our society; likewise, the circumstance that the schools were maintained at the expense of the cities, and the elections made by the municipal authorities, did not prevent them from being, in theory and *de jure*, at the same time both the City Schools and the State Schools; and the election of the masters descended, so to speak, "schematically," by the authority of the Emperor. But such rights had fallen into disuse and oblivion, so that the emperors no longer occupied themselves with the schools, save on extraordinary occasions, or for absolutely exceptional reasons. Now Julian, the most cultured man of his time, wishing to resume the guardianship of public instruction, recalled the City Councils to a rigorous exercise of their duties, and not only reaffirmed his right, but also exercised it, by reserving to himself the revision of all the elections of masters made by the Councils.

Thus far, therefore, there is nothing extraordinary, and if, in this law, we recognise Julian's mania for interfering in everything, which was decidedly one of his defects, in itself it only reveals a very laudable interest in public instruction. But this was truly a case where the sting lies in the tail.

The Emperor reserved to himself the revision of all nominations of teachers, in order, according to the law, to invest the teachers with a higher title of honour. But the reason of this was, in reality, not so innocent. Under the appearance of a general disposition, there existed a precise and well-determined intention. Julian wished to attain an end that was very much more important to him than the general management of scholastic administration. The revision of these nominations, which he explicitly arrogated to himself, would enable him to exclude Christians from the teaching staff. And, truly, Julian did not make any mystery of this. When he promulgated the law, he accompanied it by a sort of circular which has been preserved intact, and in it we clearly discern the ends to which it tended. But at the same time he explains, comments, and justifies it, with a succession of ingenious and subtle reasons which are well worthy of being examined and discussed, because they still preserve, as we say nowadays, the "charm of actuality."

But before we enter into an examination of Julian's reasons, we must see first what were the conditions which caused the Emperor to promulgate that law. A little more than half a century had passed since Christianity had been subjected to the terrible persecution of Diocletian, and behold! an emperor, a bitter enemy of Christianity, even more bitter than Diocletian, because his hatred

was inspired, not simply by reasons of State, but also by philosophical convictions, desiring to eradicate the new religion, finds nothing better to do than to close the public schools against the Christians! And the men most conspicuous among the Christians rise up in a violent and fierce indignation against a decree that must have seemed most innocent to those who recalled the methods and condemnations resorted to by the preceding persecutors. The truth is that Christianity, in the years that intervened between the decree of Milan and Julian's accession to the throne, protected by the influence of Constantine and of his sons, had become all-powerful, and made itself master of most of the civilised world. If the rural portions resisted and tenaciously preserved the worship of the ancient divinities which was so closely united with the cultivation of the fields, the cities, above all in the East, were for the greater part Christianised, and the struggles between Christians and pagans were succeeded by intestine contests between Athanasians and Arians, in the bosom of Christianity itself. But Christianity, proclaimed as the dominant and recognised religion of Hellenic civilisation, had necessarily become Hellenised. It was inevitable in the atmosphere of a society which, though rapidly falling into decadence, still lived in the memories and habits of ancient thought, and were unable to use other forms excepting those transmitted

to them by the ancients, that the flower of Palestine, with its divine Evangelical simplicity, should be lost, and that Christian propaganda should adopt the Hellenic garb of those very writers whom, from a religious point of view, it opposed. This process of evolution, by which Christianity adapted itself to Hellenic culture, in the midst of which it had to live and spread, became, in a short time, rapid and intense. The schools of rhetoric were filled with Christian pupils; Christian masters occupied the chairs of eloquence: on the benches of the School of Athens itself, the most renowned among the faculties of *belles-lettres* in the fourth century were seated, side by side with Prince Julian, a Gregory and a Basil; the Councils that followed one another rapidly in the vain attempt to adjust the terrible dissensions that rent the Church, were great arenas in which eloquence was the one powerful weapon; in short, Christianity had become Hellenised with an impetuosity and celerity which explains how, in this literary revolution, it was guided by the instinct that it was a struggle for life. And we will, furthermore, say that Hellenic culture received new life from it, as it awakened a fresh impulse no longer to be found in the decrepit civilisation of the ancient world. It is true that Greek literature fell into decadence more slowly than was the case with Latin literature, and, even in the fourth century, emitted some few flashes of light. In the Discourses

of Libanius, and above all in the writings of Julian —his Letters, Satires, and certain Orations—we occasionally encounter admirable passages; but in the literature of Hellenised Christianity there are bolder flights, and the vitality is far more intense. If we compare one of the discourses of Libanius, in which he exalts the virtues of his beloved Julian with either of the scathing orations in which Gregory of Nazianzus inveighs against the Emperor he hated, it is undeniable that, even from a literary point of view, the victory must be assigned to the Christian disputant rather than to the pagan rhetorician. And if we recall that numerous company of ecclesiastical orators and writers from Athanasius to Augustine, who have filled the fourth century with their fiery eloquence, we immediately recognise that Hellenism, entering as the constituent element of their work, became the indispensable instrument of Christian preaching.

Julian, therefore, found himself confronted with a religion most powerfully constituted, just because it had become Hellenised by recasting its elements in the ancient moulds. Even if he had so wished, he could not have opposed it by means of persecution. Roman persecution, from Nero to Diocletian, had been naught else but a *coercitio*, a police persecution, a measure of public safety against a sect that they believed to be dangerous. But such a proceeding could only be instituted by a majority against a minority. The day in which the minority became

in its turn the majority, the positions were reversed, and the persecuted became the persecutors, and this had already taken place under the sons of Constantine. Inasmuch as Julian could no longer persecute the Christians, who, if not the majority, at least formed half of his subjects, he conceived the thought of converting them by kindness, of persuading them, by his example and arguments, to return to the ancient customs. With this idea he attempted to organise a pagan clergy that would, by its virtues and zeal, prove itself superior to the Christian clergy, and he himself wrote theological discourses and treatises, composed fervent prayers, and issued, if I may use the word, "pastorals" replete with good advice, and revealing a tendency which nowadays we might call bigoted. Julian actually possessed all the necessary requisites of a Christian. But the terrible vicissitudes of his childhood, the continual menace of death to which he was subjected in his early youth, the Hellenic education which he had received in Constantinople from his first teacher, the influence of the masters with whom, later, he lived in Nicomedia; the disgraceful spectacle presented by the court of Constantius, a court exclusively Christian; the natural antagonism to his cousin, in whom he saw the murderer of his father, his brother, and his other relatives; the corruption of the Arian clergy that surrounded him; and, finally, his deep-seated passion for Greek art

and culture, made him insensible to the attractions that Christianity might have exercised over a spirit so noble and sincere as that of the young Emperor. Unequalled in his knowledge of Christian literature, which he scrutinised with an unfriendly eye, Julian set himself the task of persuading the world that Christianity was founded on a false basis, and that he intended to lead it back to polytheism, but to a polytheism metaphysically reformed by means of the symbolic doctrines of Neo-Platonism, and governed, in respect of its morals and discipline, in accordance with those rules which he drew from the source of the very religion which he wished to demolish.

Carried away by the theurgic metaphysics which had been instituted by Iamblichus and his pupils, Julian believed in the truth of polytheism transformed into a mystical symbolism, and thus the tales of Hellenic mythology were for him a series of sacred symbols. Homer and Hesiod were to him what the Bible was to the Christians. He was therefore convinced that those books, read and studied with good-will and without adverse prejudice, must exercise the most irresistible influence, and prove the most powerful instruments of reconversion to the ancient beliefs. But, in spite of this, he was forced to admit that the reading of these books did not appear to oppose any obstacle to the invasion of Christianity. What could possibly be the reason of this? Julian replied: Because in the public schools the sacred

books of polytheism are placed in the hands of Christian teachers, who either do not comprehend them, or contradict them by their conduct outside the school, or make them the subject of derision and abuse. He therefore thought that one of the most efficacious as well as most necessary precautions that he could take would be to protect the children from the effects of this perversion, and he, therefore, decided to prevent the Christian teachers from holding professorships in the schools. To arrive at this end, he promulgated his law, by which no one could become a teacher in the public schools unless they were first confirmed in their offices by the Emperor, which was as much as to say that no Christian would receive the necessary approbation. The natural consequence of Julian's decree, if rigorously applied, would have been to rebarbarise Christianity, by wresting from it those literary adornments with which it presented itself to the civilised world, and, by means of which, it gained converts to its doctrines. It is easy, therefore, to understand how, in the fourth century, Christianity rose up in arms against this law, considering it the deadliest offence and the gravest blow to which it had ever been subjected. If Julian had renewed Diocletian's persecution, Christianity would have fearlessly confronted it, knowing that it would have found in persecution a renewed strength. But Julian's move, by which he attempted to wrest from them their great instrument of propaganda, filled

them with indignation and dismay. Certainly St. Paul, for whom the whole wisdom of the world was naught else but foolishness, would have smiled at such a law. But Christianity, as we have seen, had transformed itself; it had become a worldly power, and was obliged to adopt worldly weapons, and of these Hellenic culture was one of the most indispensable. "Whence"—exclaims Gregory—"whence, O most stupid and wicked of men, came to thee the thought of depriving the Christians of the use of eloquence? Was it Mercury, as thou thyself hast said, who put it into thy head? Was it the evil demons? . . . We only, thou hast said, we only have the right to eloquence, we who speak Greek, we who adore the gods. To you ignorance and churlishness, to you for whom all wisdom is encompassed in the word, I believe!"[1] Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian, a measured and judicious writer, although recognising that Julian did not indulge in any violent and bloody persecutions, yet considers him a persecutor, because, he says, by this law he wished to prevent the Christians from sharpening their tongues so as to be able to reply to the arguments of their adversaries.[2] But the most symptomatic judgment is that of Ammianus Marcellinus. He, who was no Christian, who felt the greatest admiration for Julian, with whom he had fought, considered this decree among the few reprehensible things committed by his emperor,

[1] Greg. Naz., *op. cit.*, Orat. iii. 97. [2] Socrat., *op. cit.*, 151.

and judges it as—an inclement decree, that should be consigned to perennial silence—"*obruendum perenni silentio.*"[1] Ammianus Marcellinus was an expert soldier, an honest and impartial narrator, but a man of mediocre intelligence, who could take no interest in religious disputes. He was not a Christian, but neither was he a decided and zealous pagan. He was perfectly neutral, and, with his practical common sense, deplored that a man so accomplished and brave as Julian should condescend to embroil himself in theological disputes, and dissipate, in these extravagant superstitions, the wonderful talents with which he was endowed. His judgment is most interesting, as it cannot be the fruit of personal reflection, but rather the echo of public opinion, which was, to a great extent, influenced by the Christians, who were so energetic and numerous as to obtain the adherence even of a lukewarm pagan.

The condemnation hurled by the contemporary Christians against Julian's decree was confirmed in the following centuries, and became a settled verdict, and even to this day constitutes the principal accusation against that Imperial Utopian. But can this condemnation—certainly justifiable from the point of view of Christian apologetics—be sustained, if considered with the serene impartiality of the critic from a purely objective point of view? This is the question I wish to examine. We

[1] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, i. 289.

should put ourselves in Julian's place, and not forget that, he being convinced of the perfection of polytheism, wished to lead the world back to its worship. It was therefore only natural that he should seek the most efficacious means to resist the invasion of his enemy. As far as this goes, no one, it seems to me, could condemn him. The condemnation would not be justified unless it could be proved that the means chosen were unjust, or that while employing the legitimate means within his control, he failed to give due consideration to the opinion of others, or exceeded the limits of his authority.

Julian has anticipated this accusation, and has written his circular to refute it. The temperance displayed by his words and reasoning has only served to gain him the reputation of a hypocrite. This unhappy Julian never succeeded in satisfying any one. If he gave vent to his natural indignation, he was a tyrant; if he reasoned tranquilly, he was a hypocrite. The truth is that Julian was a man possessed with a passion for reasoning, one of those men who examine and re-examine themselves to discover the reasons that prompt their actions, and are only content when they have convinced, not only others, but also themselves, of the rationality of their conduct. In the case we have now under consideration, there was no necessity for him to be a hypocrite. Nothing could be opposed

to the execution of his law, of which he was not obliged to render account to any one. And, besides, his reasons, whatever they might be, had no value in the eyes of the Christians, and were unnecessary for the pagans. But he earnestly desired to establish his law on a rational basis, of which he gives the outline in his famous circular.

Julian's fundamental affirmation, from which he develops the thread of his argument, is that there should be no contradiction between a man's teaching and his faith and conduct, and, therefore, that it was not possible to permit these masters who were not pagans to adopt in their teachings those books that were the sacred texts of paganism. This, in Julian's opinion, constituted an absolute moral monstrosity.

The teachers who were to inspire their pupils with an admiration for Homer, Hesiod, and the other authors of antiquity, should demonstrate in their daily lives their belief in the piety and wisdom of these authors. If they did not possess such convictions, they must recognise that, in their anxiety to obtain their salaries, they were teaching that which they believed false. But let us follow, step by step, Julian's argument. "We believe"—he writes—"that good teaching does not consist in the harmony of words and speech, but rather in a disposition of the mind that has a true conception of good and evil, of honesty and dishonesty. He, therefore, who teaches in one way and thinks in

another, is not only far from being a good teacher, but is also far from being an honest man. In small things this disagreement between one's convictions and one's words is an evil that may be tolerated, but it is, nevertheless, an evil. But in matters of supreme importance, when a man thinks one way and teaches exactly the contrary of what he thinks, his conduct is similar to that of the merchants—not the honest, but the depraved ones—who recommend as highly as possible the wares that are the worse, deceiving and alluring by their praise those to whom they wish to give over that which is spoiled."

Julian here puts his fundamental principle, namely, that the Christians, having convictions absolutely diverse from those of the authors of antiquity, could not honestly attempt to discuss them, because, in good faith, they could not exhort their pupils to admire and follow their doctrines: unless, like the dishonest merchants, they seek to deceive the buyers and to sell them one merchandise for another. In order to avoid this deplorable state of affairs, Julian then continues: "It is necessary that all those who devote themselves to teaching should have good morals [and by "good morals" he means the public profession of paganism] and experience in their souls sentiments that do not differ from those they express in public." This is the most important point in Julian's argument. He affirms, as ab-

solutely admissible, the principle that the teacher of a school has no right to teach that which does not accord with the public feeling, and deduces from this the consequence that the teacher should not, in his conduct and in his personal convictions, fall into contradiction with himself. "And this"—continues Julian—"is still far more important for those who are entrusted with the teaching of the young and with explaining the writings of the ancients, whether they be rhetoricians, grammarians, or, still better, sophists, as these more than the others are masters not only of eloquence, but of morals. . . . Certainly"—continues Julian, with a bitter irony—"I give them all praise for this their aspiration towards these the highest teachings, but I would praise them more if they did not contradict and condemn themselves, thinking one thing and teaching the other. But how is it? For Homer, Hesiod, Demosthenes, Thucydides, Isocrates, Lysias, the gods are the directing power of all education. And did not some of these believe themselves to be ministers of Mercury, and others of the Muses? It, therefore, seems to me absurd that those who explain their works should not worship the gods they worshipped. But if this seems absurd to me, I do not say on this account that they should dissimulate before their scholars. I leave them free not to teach that which they cannot believe right, but, if they wish to teach, they must first teach by example, and then con-

vince their pupils that neither Homer nor Hesiod, nor any of those others whom they have commented upon, and of whom, outside the school, they condemn the impiety, the stupidity, and the errors against God, were not such as they represented them to be."

Julian insists on the necessity of an accord between the external conduct of the teacher and his teachings in the school. The teacher, by his exercises of devotion, should demonstrate that his belief in the gods is the same as that of the authors from whom he reads to his pupils. If he fail to do this, he implicitly condemns the authors whom he should teach his pupils to admire, and in this case, subtly continues the Imperial logician, "since the teachers live by means of the money earned from the writings of these authors, they must admit that they are immoderately greedy of a shameful gain, and ready to do anything for the sake of a few drachmas."

But Julian does not allude exclusively to the teachers who were really Christian. He supposes that there are some who, pagans at heart, but fearing the emperors who preceded him on the throne, and for reasons of "opportunism," neglected the worship of the gods. To these he says: "Certainly, until the present time there were reasons why one did not care to enter the temples, and the evil by which we were from all parts threatened rendered pardonable the concealment of our honest opinion concerning the gods. But

now that the gods have given us liberty, it is absurd that men should give proofs of that which they do not consider good. If, therefore, they are convinced of the wisdom of those of whom they are the expounders, let them rival these in devotion to the gods. But if, instead, they are convinced that they have erred in their conception of divinity, in such a case, let them enter into the churches of the Galileans, and explain Matthew and Luke, who have made it a law that those who believe in them should abstain from our sacred ceremonies."

We must here pause a moment before we give the final words of the document. It is most curious, and a decided proof of the prejudice that taints all judgments in regard to Julian, that, after such a clear and explicit declaration, his law should be accused of religious intolerance. It could only have been considered intolerant if he had prohibited Christian propaganda, or put obstacles in the way of their preaching and in the diffusion of Christian literature. But he says just the opposite. He said that the Christian churches were open, and exhorts their teachers to enter them and read with the faithful the books of their doctrines. When we think that Julian was most ardent in his devotion to the cause of paganism, that he was an all-powerful emperor and opposed Christianity for dogmatic reasons, we are forced to recognise, not only that he was not intolerant, but that he gave

a truly marvellous example of tolerance, and in this respect he clasps hands with the modern world, reaching over the Middle Ages and the intervening centuries. This affirmation of absolute tolerance is also evident in the last words of his circular. "For my part"—exclaims Julian, addressing himself to the Christians—"I would desire that your ears and your tongues be regenerated, as you would say, through that doctrine in which I hope that I myself, and all those who think and work in accord with me, may always participate. This is a general law for all teachers and educators. But none of the youths who wish to enter the schools will be excluded, since it would not be reasonable to close the right path to children, who do not yet know in which direction to turn, as also it would not be right to lead them, by fear and against their will, to follow the national customs, although it might appear lawful to cure them against their will, as is done with the insane. But tolerance is established for all who suffer from this disease, and the ignorant we must instruct, but not punish."[1]

Such words naturally confute the accusation that the ecclesiastical historians have advanced against Julian, *i.e.*, that he prohibited Christian youths from frequenting the schools in which Greek literature was taught. Julian explicitly says that the law only refers to the teachers, and that

[1] Julian., *ob. cit.*, 544 sq.

the youths are free to go where they please. And, after all, it would appear absolutely inconceivable that a man like Julian, who had such faith in the persuasive eloquence of the ancient writers, would willingly preclude the Christian youths from that which seemed to him the most direct and sure way of obtaining their conversion.

Having cleared the question from these accusations based upon equivocation, let us proceed to examine Julian's fundamental argument, in order to analyse its value. He starts from the premise that there should be a perfect accord between the convictions and teachings of a man, and such a premise must be absolutely approved by any one who is reasonable and conscientious. From this premise he deduces the conclusion that those teachers who did not believe in the gods worshipped by Homer and the other ancient writers, should not read and explain these authors to their pupils. Nowadays we smile at this conclusion, deduced from a rightful principle, because it would be impossible to take the mythology of Homer seriously. We admire the style and art of Homer and Virgil, and are affected by the human part of their poems, but to the mythological part we never give a thought, except so far as it interests the critic as a literary or historical document. But we must not forget that Julian found himself in very different conditions. In his time it was still possible to believe, and men did effectively

believe, in the truth of polytheism: the struggle between polytheism and Christianity still raged intensely, and he had taken in hand the cause of paganism, from the wish to restore the ancient worship. For him the books of polytheistic culture were really sacred texts, and it was quite natural that he should wish them to be respected. Now, two cases might present themselves: either the Christians, explaining in the schools the texts of the ancient writers, might use them as an argument and an opportunity to oppose polytheism, which was the fundamental doctrine of these texts, and thus offend the religion that the State and the cities recognise, with the arms that this very State and cities have placed in their hands; or the Christians, in order to retain their position as teachers, for greed of gain (through being, as Julian says, *αἰσχροκερδέστατοι*), might profess one doctrine in the schools and practise another outside, thus presenting a spectacle that seemed to Julian inconsistent and immoral.

Here we will note a curious circumstance: the regulations which govern religious instruction in the Italian elementary schools, and are the work of the subtle and well-balanced mind of Aristide Gabelli,[1] were actually inspired by that same principle which was enunciated for the first time by Julian. What did Gabelli say? He said that from the moment the Catechism was taught in the schools,

[1] Aristide Gabelli (1830–1891), celebrated pedagogue and lawyer. —TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

its teaching ought to be entrusted to persons who believed the doctrines they interpreted, and in the absence of these, to the only teacher really competent, the priests, although it is decidedly a subject of discussion whether the Catechism should be permitted in the schools, but once admitted, it would be repugnant to every honest conscience to permit it to be taught by those who might make it a subject of confutation or derision. Now, Julian said exactly the same thing. "I do not wish," he said, "that the books in which every page speaks of the gods of Greece and of Rome, in which I, and half the civilised world, still believe, should fall into the hands of teachers interested in demolishing the faith in these gods." It seems, in truth, difficult to find a persecutor more reasonable or more considerate.

Undoubtedly, for the Christians of the fourth century, the true question was more complicated and serious, from the circumstance that the books that Julian wished to take out of their hands were the only texts which could serve for educational purposes. The ancient world did not know what science, in the modern sense of the word, was. The teaching in the schools consisted only of rhetoric, by which the pupils learnt how to become orators, how to employ those literary forms by which thought, be it political, legal, or religious, should be clothed so as to make it acceptable and comprehensible. This art could only be acquired by studying the examples

of ancient literature, and the prohibition to Christian teachers to use this literature was tantamount to excluding them, in the most absolute manner, from public teaching. And thus teachers of great fame, as Præresius in Athens and Simplicianus in Rome, not wishing to commit apostasy, had been obliged to retire from their chairs. Now, it is certain that Julian must have been greatly pleased by this circumstance, that enabled him to arrive at his aim of barbarising Christianity. It was a most fortunate event for him, and one which he fully had the right to use as a lawful weapon, that from the principle of intellectual honesty which he had propounded, should be derived consequences of such a substantial importance. He confined the Christians to the study of the true texts of Christianity, and reserved for the pagans the books that were truly pagan. A Christian emperor would not have permitted the Gospels to be explained and held up to derision by a pagan teacher; Julian could not allow the Christian teachers to treat Homer and Hesiod in the same manner. In all this, religious tolerance had not been wounded in the slightest manner.

But if Julian did not offend religious tolerance with his law, as it was interpreted by him, can it be said that he did not interfere with the liberty of instruction? The question is a most delicate one, and cannot be settled by overwhelming him with eloquent denunciations, after the manner of the

ancient disputants, because the problem involves the great question of the rights and duties of the State—a problem that is still a subject of discussion, and will continue to be such as long as social order exists. We must, in the first place, remember that Julian's law referred to the city schools, which represented public teaching maintained at the expense of the cities, and, therefore, by the financial and administrative organisation of the State, it was really State teaching, proceeding directly from the authority of the Emperor. Therefore Julian affirmed that the teachers should not have opinions in opposition to those of the State. He did not interfere with those who taught in the Christian schools, but he did not admit that Christian teachers should enter the schools of a polytheistic State, as they might attempt to undermine its basis. Julian reasons thus: "The State is an organism created to exercise certain functions. It would therefore be absurd that the State should be willing to permit these functions to be exercised by those whose aim is to injure it; this would amount to suicide." This process of reasoning is so vital that, even in our days, with the modifications necessitated by the different conditions of culture, it still exists, and arguments are found to sustain it. It is true that modern thought, living in the *milieu* of scientific civilisation—that glorious achievement of our century—has promulgated, as one of its fundamental canons, that intelligence is absolute

mistress of itself, and, therefore, in science, the State cannot impose its opinion on others, and should leave the field open to the discussion and diffusion of all doctrines. There cannot exist a State science of physics, astronomy, or philology. But it might be said, this is all right and true as far as positive science is concerned, but the aspect changes when we consider those doctrines that directly influence the moral tendencies of the individual and determine his actions. The State, just because it is an organism destined to exercise certain functions, is likewise based on a moral doctrine. Therefore, being also constrained to enter as a combatant into the contest of ideas, it cannot be asked to open its doors to an enemy and consign to it the arms of defence which it has in hand. The State has not only the right, but the duty, to defend its organisation. And could it possibly, while leaving a free hand to its enemies, fetter its own, and confide the exercise of its functions to those who wish to destroy it?

All these reasons are tacitly understood in Julian's law, and give more prominence and power to the action of the State in matters pertaining to public instruction, and are even to-day of such importance that in France they suggest a law proposed by the Minister Waldeck-Rousseau, to close the Government Civil Service against those who have not received instruction in the State schools, and, better still, the law just voted by the French Parliament, which denies the right of

teaching to those religious corporations which have not obtained a special authorisation. Even in this case, once more we see demonstrated, in the most luminous manner, the irony of human things: reactionaries and radicals mutually reproach each other as to their choice in their methods of government, when these methods turn to their detriment, but they do not hesitate to make use of the same methods when they tend to their advantage. Julian was loath that the youths who frequented the public schools of his time should be educated by teachers necessarily inimical to the pagan State that he wished to preserve. The French Premier does not wish the Civil Service of the Republican State he governs to be accessible to youths educated in those schools where they are taught to hate and plot against the Republic. Against this French law there arises a cry of protest similar to that raised against Julian's law, seventeen centuries ago. However, each of these laws has a rational basis. They may be considered inopportune, but they do not seem to us tyrannical. Such would be a law that sought to stifle the free expansion of ideas; but this cannot be said of a law by which the State seeks to prevent itself from being destroyed by those adverse ideas which are even being propagated at its expense. The teacher or official in the school or the office, who, by word or deed, acts against the State from which he receives his employment and his salary, presents a most immoral

spectacle. The State has the right of putting an end to this. But this right is never, of course, recognised by those who consider themselves offended, because, in questions of the moral order, judgment is necessarily obscured by passion, and there is nothing like playing the victim to persuade others and ourselves that we are in the right. And this is a consideration that should prevent those who have the responsibility of power from making provisions which, although rational and justifiable in themselves, may often bring about results exactly opposite to those expected. The Emperor Julian had not the slightest intention of making victims, but, like many others after him, he had the misfortune of appearing to do so, and that has given to those who wish to defame him, the opportunity of making a great noise about his persecutions. His decree, therefore, was most unfortunate, and much more injurious to himself than to his enemies; for the appearance of being persecuted is, in this world, a tower of strength to those who are desirous of wielding a moral influence over humanity.

JULIAN.
ENLARGED PHOTO OF A SARDONYX INTAGLIO IN THE CABINET DES MÉDAILLES, PARIS.
(By permission of M. E. Babelon.)

THE SAME.
(Actual size.)

To face page 421.

JULIAN'S DISILLUSION

THE unfortunate Julian, during his brief career, was doomed to be the victim of a sad disillusion, for which he had only himself to blame. He must very soon have understood that his most carefully laid plans had failed to accomplish the aim so dear to his heart. The polytheistic propaganda, although promulgated and directed by the Emperor himself, had met but with little success. Even those devoid of enthusiasm for Christianity exhibited an absolute indifference to the restoration of the ancient cults. Julian's most strenuous efforts were void of results. On all sides he was confronted with the proof of this state of affairs, and his acute understanding enabled him to appreciate their bitter significance. To a friend in Cappadocia, he writes: "Point me out in all Cappadocia a single man who is truly a Hellenist, because, so far, I have only met those who do not care to offer sacrifices, and those who are inclined to do so, do not know how."[1] And closing his letter to the High Priest of Galatia, containing the instructions relative to the organisation of

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 484.

priesthood, with which we are already acquainted, he says: "I am ready to come to the assistance of the inhabitants of Pesinus, if they endeavour to propitiate the Mother of the Gods; if they neglect her, not only will I reprove them, but, although it is unpleasant for me to say so, they will experience the consequences of my anger.

To me it is not permitted either to receive or load with gifts
A mortal under the ban of the divine ire.

Convince them, therefore, that if they desire me to interest myself in their welfare, they must unanimously devote themselves to the Mother of the Gods."[1]

It is a strange and a symptomatic fact that in the very city that harboured the sanctuary of the goddess, the most important figure of reformed polytheism, Julian was obliged to resort to threats to spur on the exhausted zeal of the inhabitants, and incite them to honour the gods!

But particularly interesting, even in this respect, is the graceful letter written by Julian to Libanius, in which he describes the march from Antioch to Hierapolis.[2] Arriving at Litharbos, the first post of his journey, Julian is overtaken by the Senate of Antioch, to whom he gives audience in his lodgings. It is most probable that the Antiochians desired to appease the indignant emperor, who, on leaving their city, had declared

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 555. [2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, 515.

that he never intended to return to it. He does not give the result of the conference, preferring to acquaint Libanius with it *vivâ voce*, when they meet again, if he has not already heard it. From Litharbos he goes to Beroe, where he remains for one day to visit the Acropolis, to sacrifice a white bull to Jupiter, and to confer with its Senate concerning the worship of the gods. "But alack!" exclaims Julian, with a smile both ironic and sad, "all warmly praised my discourse, but very few were convinced, and those few were already convinced before hearing!"

From Beroe, Julian travels to Batne, a spot of surpassing beauty, only to be compared with Daphne, the suburb of Antioch, before the Temple of Apollo had been destroyed by fire. The loveliness of the plain, the exquisite groves of green cyprus, the modest Imperial palace, the gardens that surround it less splendid than those of Alcinous, but similar to those of Laertes, the beds full of vegetables and the trees laden with fruit—all, in truth, charm and delight him. And, added to this, the perfume of incense that filled the air, and the solemn pomp which attended the offering of sacrifice. But even here the insatiable Emperor was not wholly content; the excess of his religious zeal left him no peace, and he seemed to find a pleasure in tormenting himself. The great excitement and display of luxury appear to him unnecessary. According to his ideas, the worship of

the gods should be conducted with tranquil dignity, and he decides that he will, later on, arrange everything as it should be. Perhaps the suspicious Julian saw in these excessive manifestations a desire to throw dust in his eyes, and not a proof of sincere devotion. He finally arrives at Hierapolis, where he is received by Sopater, the pupil and son-in-law of Iamblichus, the philosopher, Julian's god on earth. His joy is immense, the more so, because Sopater is personally dear to him, and because when he had entertained Constantius and Gallus and they pressed him to forsake the worship of the gods, he valiantly resisted, and kept himself free from the prevailing disease (*οὐκ ἐλήφθη τῇ νόσῳ*).

He does not write to Libanius concerning political and military affairs, as it would be impossible to discuss so many things in one letter. But in order to give him an idea of what he is doing, he notes that he has sent a mission to the Saracens to secure them as allies, has organised a service of information, presided over military tribunals, has collected a quantity of horses and mules for transport, and brought together a fleet of river boats laden with flour and biscuits. To this we must add his great epistolary correspondence that follows him wherever he goes, and his reading, which is never interrupted. Certainly no man was ever so thoroughly occupied.

However, the most evident proof of Julian's lack of success is furnished by Ammianus Marcellinus.

He was not a Christian. It would therefore be supposed that, in writing the history of the apostate Emperor, he would express himself with the greatest enthusiasm concerning the attempt he had initiated, and welcome in his person the long expected restorer. But such was not the case. Ammianus on this subject is icily indifferent. He makes some sarcastic allusions to the Christians, who hate each other much more fiercely than ferocious beasts; but Julian's enterprise does not interest him in the slightest, as he only sees in it a fad, a philosopher's day-dream, unworthy of serious consideration. As we have previously seen, he considers the decree which deprived the Christian teachers of the use of pagan books as excessive ("inclemens") and does not hesitate to express his disapproval of the ritualistic mania of the over-zealous Emperor. Now, if this was the case with Ammianus, a man who, judging from his culture, ought to have been particularly devoted to the ancient cult, it is easy to imagine the profound indifference, we might say hostility, that Julian encountered in the social body to whom the ideals of Hellenism had become absolutely extraneous. The truth is that Julian was only understood by the rhetoricians and philosophers who belonged to the narrow Neo-Platonic *coterie*. If we want to see his work appreciated, we must refer to the "Necrologia" of Libanius, which, while noting Julian's many glories and merits, also attributes to

him the re-establishment of the religious sentiment which had been so long banished from the world.[1]

But Julian, nevertheless, had a few consolations, in the midst of his many disillusions. Great must have been his joy when some conspicuous personage of the Christian Church returned to the bosom of polytheism. This, however, happened only on extremely rare occasions. The complete vanity of his attempt and the exhaustion of paganism were evident to all. The only case with which we are acquainted is that of Bishop Pegasius, and it is narrated by Julian himself, in a letter that is one of the most precious in his collection of Epistles, especially because it is such a living picture of the atmosphere in which he lived. Julian, it appears, had promoted the apostate bishop to some high sacerdotal dignity, and, by so doing, had wounded the susceptibility of some strict Hellenist. The Emperor thus answers :[2]—

"We should certainly not have received Pegasius so readily if we had not been assured that even before, when he was Bishop of the Galileans, he was not averse to acknowledge and love the gods. And I do not assert this because I have heard it from those who are in the habit of speaking when moved either by love or hate, as even, in my hearing, there has been a great deal of idle talk concerning him, so that, by the gods, I believe I ought to have hated him more than any other

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, 249.

[2] Julian., *op. cit.*, 603.

individual among those wicked people. But, when I was called by Constantius to the army, I began my journey from the Troad in the early morning, and arrived at Ilium at the hour of the market. He came to meet me, and on my saying that I wished to visit the city—which served me as a pretext to enter the temples—he offered to be my guide, and accompanied me everywhere. And he acted and spoke in such a manner as to awaken doubts in me as to whether he was really ignorant of his duties towards the gods.

"There is in Ilium a sanctuary dedicated to Hector, and there, in a little temple, you see his statue in bronze. Opposite to his statue is that of the great Achilles *sub cælo*. If you ever visited the spot, you will remember what I am describing. . . . I discovered still alight, I might almost say burning brightly, the fire on the altar, and the statue of Hector shining with ointment. Turning to Pegasius, I asked, 'What is the meaning of this? Do the inhabitants of Ilium still persevere in the worship of the gods?' I wished, without appearing to put the question, to find out his manner of thinking. And he replied, 'Why is it strange that they should honour a brave man, their fellow-citizen, as we honour our martyrs?' The comparison was by no means opportune, but the intention, considering the moment, was praiseworthy. After this I said, 'Let us go to the temple of the Ilian Minerva.' And he, full of good-will, conducted

me thither, opening the temple with his own hands, and he pointed out to me with great concern, as if it were of importance to him, that all the sacred images were safe, and did not make any of the acts in which the impious ones indulge, neither did he make the sign of the cross on his forehead, nor did he mumble unto himself, as they are wont to do. For the acme of all theology among these people lies in these two things, murmuring imprecation against the demons, and making the sign of the cross upon their foreheads.

"Of these two facts I have already spoken with thee. But I must not keep silence concerning a third that just now comes to my mind. He followed me to the sanctuary of Achilles, and showed me that the sepulchre was intact. And I found out that it was he who had discovered it. And he stood before it in an attitude of the deepest respect. All this I saw myself. And I heard from others who were his enemies that he secretly prayed and knelt to the sun-god. Did he not thus receive me when as yet I only professed my faith in private? Of our individual disposition towards the gods, who are better judges than the gods themselves? And should we have named Pegasius priest if we knew that, in any manner, he had sinned against the gods? If in that time, either through the desire of power, or, as he himself often told me, to save the temples of the gods, he clothed himself with those rags, and

pretended, in words only, to practise their impiety (he in fact did no other damage to the temples than to knock down a few stones from their roofs, in order to save the rest), shall we blame him for this? Should we not feel ashamed to treat him in such a manner as to give pleasure to the Galileans, who only desire to see him suffer? If thou hast any regard for me, thou wilt honour not this one alone, but all others who become converted; thus they will more easily hearken to us who invite them to follow that which is best. If we repulse those who spontaneously come to us, no one will heed our call. . . ."

This Pegasius must have been a cunning rogue. Probably he had some information about Julian's secret Hellenistic tendencies. Foreseeing the eventuality of Julian, the sole male heir of the Constantinian family, being called to the throne at no distant day, notwithstanding the jealousy of Constantius, the astute Bishop was preparing the ground for a future *volte-face*, and that without compromising himself with the then ruling powers. The art with which he knew how to insinuate himself into the good graces of Julian, apparently so candid and yet so non-committal, gives evidence of great subtlety and shrewdness, and Julian, ingenuous, like all over-zealous apostles, let himself be hoodwinked, and mistook a sharp intriguer and a bit of clever acting for a serious man and the proof of a profound conviction. The converts that

he made from among the deserters from Christianity could only be men as despicable as Pegasius. His friends and followers protested against the honours accorded to these; but the unhappy Emperor, for lack of better results, was obliged to content himself with even the appearance of success, and to find in imposture a reason for recompense.

But the full confession of Julian's disillusion we find in the bitter sarcasms of the *Misopogon*. The *Misopogon* (*Μισοπώγων*) is Julian's masterpiece. In his other writings, excepting of course some of the Letters, which are most beautiful, there is too much of the pedantic *littérateur*, of the rhetorician, who writes species of essays on the restricted lines of predetermined models. The *Banquet of the Cæsars* is, as we shall see later, a satire not without spirit and sentiment, but it seems forced, and lacks spontaneity and genuine inspiration. In the *Misopogon*, Julian really speaks *ex abundantia cordis*, and his satire, besides being a vivid picture of the corruption of a great city during the Lower Empire, is a perfect revelation of the character of the man and the sovereign, and of the embarrassing position in which he had become entangled. And the writer gives proof of no little art, because, from the beginning to the end of this long pamphlet against the inhabitants of Antioch, he never fails to maintain the irony with which he accuses himself and assumes the

part of his slanderers. And how many witty sayings! What cutting repartees, how many amusing episodes, and, underlying it all, what bitterness and disillusion!

The following circumstance gave birth to this spirited philippic of the offended Emperor. Julian, after having remained nearly a year at Constantinople, left there, in the summer of 362, for Antioch, which he decided to make his headquarters, for the preparation of the expedition against the king of Persia. He visited Nicomedia, where he had passed a part of his youth, and was greatly distressed at seeing how much it had suffered from the earthquake which had just taken place; then passing through Nicæa, he stopped at Pesinus to worship at the shrine of the goddess Cybele, the Mother of the Gods, and during the night he writes his mystical dissertation. By way of Ancyra and Tarsus, Julian arrives at Antioch, and is there received by an immense multitude, who welcome him as the new Star in the East.[1] But the popular enthusiasm was not of long duration, and it soon became evident that, between the Emperor and the Antiochians, there was a radical discord. Julian, even in the midst of his great preparations for his Persian expedition, did not forget the principal object of his reign, that is to say, the re-establishment of a moralised paganism. Now Antioch,

[1] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, i. 287, 3 sq.

a city in which Christianity had taken root ever since apostolic times, was almost entirely Christian. This, however, did not prevent its being one of the most corrupt, luxurious, and depraved cities of the East. Julian, with the imprudent over-zealousness of the religious reformer and preacher, unflinchingly assailed the habits, prejudices, and abuses which pervaded this great city. The inhabitants, on their side, were indignant at this disturber, who pretended to revive rites and ceremonies long since fallen into disuse, openly disapproved of their licentious habits, and expressed the greatest disdain for theatrical pageants, horse-races, and all the other amusements so dear to their effeminate souls. In repressing these abuses, he wounded the interests of those highly-placed and the jobbers, of whom there seemed to be a great number in the city. In place of the religious enthusiasm which burned so ardently in his heart, he found among the Antiochians a hostile indifference, and was obliged to recognise that his moralising tendencies were in absolute contradiction to the confirmed habits and the irreparable decadence of the public spirit. This, of course, gave rise to the most strident discord, and an increasing feeling of distrust and dislike between the Emperor and the Antiochians. But the Antiochians lacked either the energy or the inclination for open rebellion. They possessed all the Greek acuteness and subtlety, and they used them to deride the

Emperor. Julian's severe aspect, his harsh and unpolished manners, his untidy clothes, and above all his beard—a most unusual sight among the clean-shaven and effeminate-looking faces of the Antiochians—were unfailing sources of jest and jeer. The city was filled with libels written in verse ridiculing the Emperor, and these libels formed the greatest subject of amusement for this population, pre-eminently worthless and *frondeuse*. If Julian had been a tyrant, or even only a harsh and violent ruler, he would very easily have avenged himself on those who scoffed at him, and thus have put an end to their disrespectful jests. For not only a tyrant of ancient times, but probably a sovereign of to-day, might have acted in this manner. But Julian, by nature kindly and long-suffering, decided to avenge himself in a way that, for an emperor, was as peculiar as it was unusual. He repaid the Antiochians in their own coin, and composed a satire against them in reply to those they had written against him. And who would have said then that his revenge would be really more efficacious than any other? If he had followed a contrary course, and punished the offenders with prison or death, his insulters would either have been forgotten or glorified as martyrs; on the contrary, by the power of his wit he has kept their memory alive, and has handed them down to the lasting ridicule of posterity. Ammianus Marcellinus, conscientious

narrator, faithful soldier, and devoted to Julian, whom he admires for his virtue and intelligence, did not approve of the publication of the *Misopogon*, as it seemed to him an exaggerated and imprudent satire. But the good Ammianus was an Antiochian himself, and therefore inclined to excuse his fellow-citizens, and, moreover, as he was a pedantic writer, he did not possess a taste for literary beauty. He, most probably, admired those works of his Emperor in which the latter followed the scholastic methods of the rhetoric of his time, but could not appreciate the elegance of this discourse, in which Julian, liberated from the bonds of his school, gives us a true insight into his wit and his poetic talent.

Believing it may be agreeable to our few but appreciative readers, we will offer them the translation of a great part of the *Misopogon*. Like all the rest of Julian's writings, this pamphlet lacks the *arduus limæ labor*, and is irregular in its composition. But it has the great merit of being absolutely living, the natural outpouring of his inmost heart. The personality of the author, with its original and passionate emotion, shines forth in the pages of this bitter and brilliant satire, which is also a speaking picture of public life during the fourth century. The curse of the Church has put under ban and condemned to unmerited oblivion this little volume, for many reasons well worthy of consideration.

In order fully to understand the satire, we must never forget that, from beginning to end, it is a bitter and ironic jest, and that Julian assumes against himself the part of his slanderers, reproducing their words as if they were his own, and certainly exaggerating their expressions.[1]

"The poet Anacreon"—thus he begins—"composed many graceful odes; the fates allowed him to enjoy himself. But neither to Alcæus nor to Archilocus did the gods permit that their Muse should sing of joy and pleasure. For many reasons, constrained to be sad, they made use of poetry to render more bearable to themselves the invectives with which their familiar spirit inspired them against the wicked. The law forbids me to accuse by name those whom I have not offended, but who are, notwithstanding, evilly disposed towards me, and the fashion that now rules the education of free men debars me from writing songs, as it is now considered more shameful to write poetry than it once was to enrich oneself dishonestly. But for all this, as long as it is possible, I intend to avail myself of the help of the Muses. I remember having heard the barbarians sing along the banks of the Rhine, and their voices could hardly be distinguished from the croaking of crows; yet they seemed to take pleasure in their songs, for it appears that the fact of their being disagreeable to others does not prevent

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 433 sq.

bad musicians from taking pleasure in their own performance. . . . And I, too, sing for the Muses and myself. My song, however, to tell the truth, will be in prose, and will contain much contumely not against others, by Jove!—how could I possibly venture, if the law forbids it?—but rather against the poet and singer himself. And no law forbids a man writing praises of or insults to himself. But, however great may be my desire, I have no reason to praise myself, and on the contrary I have many reasons to find fault with myself, beginning with my personal appearance.[1] Because on this my face, which Nature made neither beautiful, pleasing, nor graceful, I, in contempt and disgust, have grown this thick beard, as if to revenge myself on Nature because she has not made me pretty. And I permit the lice to run riot through my beard, like wild beasts in a forest. And I am not able to eat immoderately, nor to drink in great gulps, for I must be overcautious not to swallow my hair with my food. As to not being able to receive or give kisses, that does not worry me very much, though in this respect, as in others, my beard is most inconvenient, not permitting me to press 'pure lips to sweet lips, which makes the kiss sweeter,' according to one of the poets who, together with Pan and Calliope, sing of Daphne. But you say that of my hair

[1] It must not be forgotten that Julian, for purposes of sarcasm, repeats, as if confirming them, the jeers of his slanderers.

one might easily twine ropes. And I would most willingly offer it to you, only the question would be if you could pluck it off, for, being so tough, it might injure your nerveless and delicate hands. . . . But I am not satisfied with the roughness of my chin, my head also is all dishevelled, and very seldom do I trim my hair or cut my nails, and my fingers are often black with ink. And if you wish to hear something that I have never before acknowledged, my chest is rugged and as full of hairs as that of a lion who rules over the wild beasts, and, because of my roughness and negligence, I have never taken the trouble to render it tender and more soft than any other part of the body. But let us speak of other things. Not satisfied with having such a body, I have undoubtedly the most disagreeable habits. My churlishness is so great that I keep away from the theatres, and in the Imperial palace permit only one theatrical representation, at the New Year, and that unwillingly, as one who pays a tribute, and ungracefully hands over what he has to a hard taskmaster. . . . This should be sufficient proof of bad habits. But to this I can add something more. I hate horse-racing as much as debtors do the market. I am rarely present, only on the feasts of the gods, and never spend the whole day there, as was the usual habit of my cousin, uncle, and brother. After having witnessed six races at the utmost, and by Jove! certainly not with the air

of one enjoying the amusement, but rather as one thoroughly bored, I am only too happy to get away. But who can tell how much I have offended you? The sleepless nights on my rude couch, and the food which is not sufficient to surfeit me, makes me churlish and inimical to a city that only cares for amusements. But if such be my habits, it is no fault of yours. A grave error, into which I have fallen since my childhood, induced me to make war on my stomach, and I have never accustomed myself to fill it with too much food."

And Julian here relates that it only happened to him once in his life to vomit up his dinner—a habit which, it appears, was usual among the Antiochians, as it had once been among the Romans. And this incident took place during his sojourn in Paris—his dear Lutetia, as he calls it. It was not brought about by eating too much food, but from causes quite different. Having warmed with live embers the room in which he was sleeping, this imprudence produced giddiness, fainting and nausea. This digression is charming, with its description of the Gallic winter, the frozen Seine, and the barbaric vigour of the inhabitants.

"Thus"—continues Julian[1]—"in the midst of the Celts, like the 'Rough Man' of Menander, I accustomed myself to rough habits. But if this was to the taste of the uncouth Celts, it is reasonable that it should elicit the scorn of a beautiful,

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 440, 10 sq.

happy, and populous city, where there are many dancers and flutists, mimes more numerous than the citizens, and not the slightest respect for its sovereign. Weak men blush for certain habits; but brave men, like you, go to bed in the morning after having spent the night in orgies. In this manner you show your contempt for the law, not in words, but by deeds. . . . And dost thou imagine"—Julian makes the Antiochians reply to him—"that it was possible for thy roughness, misanthropy, and harshness to harmonise with these customs? O thou most stupid and hateful of men, is that which the ignorant call thy sapient apology for a soul so silly and inept, that thou couldst imagine it was possible to adorn and embellish it with wisdom? Thou art mistaken, because, first of all, we do not know what wisdom is; we hear its name, but ignore what it does. If this consists in what thou doest, in the knowing that we must obey the gods and the laws, treat equals as equals, tolerate their superiority, be careful to see that the poor are not offended by the rich, and for all this, submit, as it has often happened to thee, to disdain, anger, and abuse, and suffer even this serenely and without irritation, not giving way to temper, but controlling it, and, as is fitting, to be prudent; and some one might add to this, that it is also wisdom to abstain in public from any pleasure that would be compromising and not commendable, in the persuasion that he

who cannot restrain himself, and delights in theatre-going, cannot act wisely in the privacy of his home; if this be wisdom, thou art on the road to perdition, and wouldst take us with thee—we who, above all, do not tolerate the name of servitude, neither to the gods nor the laws. Liberty in all things is sweet. And what irony! Thou sayest that thou art not the master, and wilt not tolerate that name, and art so indignant as to force those who had the ancient habit of using it to discontinue doing so, because it is odious to the sovereign, and then thou obligest us to obey the commands of the law. But would it not be better that thou shouldst call thyself master, and that we, to all intents and purposes, should be free, O man of gentle words and of acts most harsh? And this is not enough; thou tormentest the rich by forcing them to be moderate in the tribunals, and restrainest the poor from becoming informers. By sending away the actors, mimes and musicians, thou hast ruined our city, so that, because of thee, there remains nothing good, excepting thy pedantry that we have tolerated for seven months, and of which we hope to be liberated by uniting in prayer with the processions of silly old women who wander around among the sepulchres.[1] We have sought, in the meanwhile, to obtain the same effect by means of our good humour, and

[1] Here Julian derides the cult of the tombs of the martyrs, so fervently practised by the Christians, and by him considered as a ridiculous superstition.

have wounded thee with our jeers, as with arrows. And thou, O valorous one, how shalt thou withstand the arrows of the Persians, if thou quailest before our raillery?"

Here follows a most curious passage, which gives us a good insight into Julian's soul and intentions. The Antiochians were not badly disposed towards him, nor did they deny him their applause. But the fact was, that between the Antiochians and himself there existed a profound dissension. They did not in the least appreciate the spirit of religious reform that was so dear to him and constituted the supreme aim of his government. When he entered the temples, the crowds accompanied and saluted him with shouts and applause. But Julian was much more struck by the lack of respect for the holy places than by the flattering reception they accorded him, and, instead of thanking the citizens, he chided them. The sceptical Antiochians, true children of an expiring civilisation, did not understand this strange emperor, and laughed at him. "Thou enterest the temples,"—so Julian makes them say to him,[1]—"O thou rough, awkward, and, in all respects, odious man. The crowd, especially the magistrates, rush into the temples because of thee, and receive thee there, as in the theatres, with shouts and applause. And, instead of being pleased, and praising them for what they have done, thou, wishing to be more wise than God

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 443, 15 sq.

himself, speakest to the crowds and rebukest severely those who shout, saying: 'You seldom come into the temples to adore the gods, but you come because of me, and fill the holy places with disorder. It behoves wise men to pray sedately and to ask in silence for the favour of the gods. . . . But you, instead of praising the gods, praise men, or, to express it more truly, instead of praising the gods, you flatter men. And I think it would be best not even to praise the gods excessively, but rather to serve them with wisdom. . . . Thou must accustom thyself to be hated and vituperated in private and in public, since thou dost condemn as adulation the applause with which thou wert received in the temples. It is evident that thou art unable to adapt thyself either to the *convenances*, the habits or the life of men. And so be it. But who would be able to stand even this, that thou sleepest all the night alone, refusing everything that might soften thy harsh and ugly soul? Thou holdest thyself aloof from all tenderness. And the worst of the evil is that thou enjoyest this kind of life, and takest pleasure in that which all others detest. And, moreover, thou becomest angry with those who tell thee so! Thou shouldst, on the contrary, thank those who, out of kindness and with great anxiety, exhort thee, in their verses, to pluck out the hair from thy face, and to offer to this population, who love to laugh, some spectacle that would be

agreeable to them, beginning by thyself, and after that, mimes, musicians, women without shame, boys so beautiful that they can be mistaken for women, men who are so entirely without hair, not only on their cheeks, but also on their whole bodies, that they are more smooth-skinned than women themselves, festivals, processions, but by Jove! not the sacred ones in which it is necessary to comport oneself gravely. Of this sort we have had enough; in fact, we are thoroughly surfeited with them. The Emperor has sacrificed once in the temple of Jove, then in the temple of Fortune; he went three times in succession to the temple of Ceres, and we do not know how many times to that of Apollo—that temple betrayed by the neglect of its guardians and destroyed by the audacity of the impious. The Syrian festival arrives, and the Emperor immediately presents himself at the temple of Jove; then comes the general festival, and the Emperor again goes to the temple of Fortune; he abstains on a day of bad omen, and then immediately offers up his prayers again in the temple of Jove. But who then could tolerate an emperor who makes such frequent visits to the temples, when he should be free to disturb the gods only from time to time and to celebrate, instead, those festivals that may be common to the whole population, and in which even those who do not know the gods, and of whom the city is full, may take their part? These, forsooth, would give us pleasure and enjoy-

ment, and be accessible to all, looking at the dancing men, the many boys and women.'—When I think of this"—so Julian pretends to answer the Antiochians—"I congratulate myself on your happy frame of mind, but I am not dissatisfied with myself, since, through the grace of some god, my habits are dear to me. However, as you well know, I do not become angry with those who abuse my manner of living. On the contrary, to the witticisms they hurl at me, I add, as far as I am able, these insults which I unstintingly shower upon myself, and it is right that it should be so, because I did not, in the beginning, understand the habits of this town. And for all this I am convinced that no man of my age has read as many books as I have!"

And then Julian relates the well-known tale of Antiochus, who became enamoured of his stepmother, and infers from this that the inhabitants of a city that had been called after Antiochus must be no less devoted to pleasure than he was. "It is impossible"—he then continues in a bantering tone, but not without bitterness[1]—"it is impossible to reprove posterity for endeavouring to rival its founder and name-giver, since even the trees transmit their peculiarities, so that the branches resemble, in every respect, the stem from which they spring, so, too, with men, the habits of the ancestors are transmitted to their descendants."

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 449, 3 sq.

And this is the reason why the Greeks are superior to all nations, and the Athenians first among the Greeks. Thus Julian continues: "But if they maintain in their customs the ancient ideas of virtue, it is natural that this should also be the case with the Syrians, the Arabs, the Celts, the Thracians, the Peonians, the Mœsians, who live between the Peonians and the Thracians, on the banks of the Danube. Now, from the last-named my race has sprung, and I inherit from them my harsh, severe, intractable character, so refractory to love, and so immovable in its purposes. Therefore I begin by asking pardon for myself, and this pardon may be of some use even to you, who are so attached to the habits of your forefathers. It is not with the intention of giving offence that I apply to you the line of Homer—

Liars, but excellent dancers at the balls!

On the contrary, I mean it as praise, for you preserve the love of your national traditions! And Homer also, with the same purpose, and wishing to praise Autolicus, said that he surpassed all others as a thief and a perjurer. And I also am infatuated with my churlishness, my roughness. I delight in not being easily influenced, in not regulating my affairs according to the desires of those who pray me or deceive me, in never being affected by tumults; yea, all this disgrace, I love it! . . . But, if I think of it, I find in myself many

other faults. Arriving in a city which, though free, does not tolerate any disorder in the arrangement of the hair, I entered it with my hair uncut and my beard as long as if there was a lack of barbers. I wished to appear as an old grumbler and a rough soldier, when, with a few artistic touches, I might have passed for a handsome boy, and appear quite youthful, if not in age, at least on account of the freshness and softness of my face. . . . Thou dost not know how to mix with men, and to imitate the polypus that assumes the colour of the stones to which it clings. . . . Hast thou forgotten that there is a difference between ourselves and the Celts, the Thracians and the Illyrians? Dost thou not see how many shops there are in this city? Thou renderest thyself hateful to the shopkeepers, not permitting them to sell their wares, at the price they desire, to the inhabitants as well as to strangers. The merchants accuse the proprietors of lands of being responsible for the high prices. Thou makest these also thy enemies by compelling them to act according to justice. And the magistrates of the city, goaded by the double reproof (as before they enjoyed double gains, being at the same time merchants and land-owners), are at present displeased at seeing the illicit gains from both sides wrested from them. And, in the meanwhile, this Syrian rabble is angry, as it cannot dance and get drunk! And thou thinkest that thou canst feed them sufficiently by providing them with all the

grain they need? A thousand thanks, but dost thou not know that one cannot find an oyster in the town? . . . Would it not be better to pass through the market perfuming it with incense, and conducting in thy suite a bevy of graceful girls, who would attract the notice of the citizens, and choirs of women whom we are in the habit of seeing in our midst?"

To these questions, which the pungent writer attributes to his adversaries, he replies with the account of his education with which we are already acquainted (see "Life of Julian," pp. 28–32). Even here the words of Julian must be taken as they are meant, ironically; and his apparent reproof to the eunuch Mardonius, to whose care he was confided during his boyhood, is but an expression of the admiration and respect that Julian nourished for this man, to whom he owed the peculiar bent of his mind.

Julian, after having given an account of his education, goes on to say that by the study of the ancients, and especially of Plato, he learnt that the sovereign has the duty of leading his subjects by his example and wisdom to the practice of virtue.

"But,"—the Antiochians reply,[1]—"for prudential reasons, thou shouldst desist from constraining men to act justly, and permit each one to act according to his will or his ability. The peculiarity of our city is to desire unrestricted liberty. And thou, not comprehending this, wouldst govern it

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 458, 10 sq.

with wisdom? But dost thou not observe that amongst us there is absolute liberty even for the asses and camels? Their drivers lead them under the porticoes as if they were tender young girls. The uncovered streets and the squares seem not to have been made to be used by pack-saddled asses; these wish to pass under the porticoes, and no one forbids it, so that liberty should be respected! See how free our city is! And thou wouldst have our youths quiet and think about subjects pleasing to thee, or at least say that which you like to hear? But they are accustomed to the greatest freedom in amusements, and they indulge in them without any restraint."

"The inhabitants of Tarentum"—thus Julian continues—"received condign punishment for their jeers made at the expense of the Romans, when, being drunk at the feast of Bacchus, they insulted an embassy of the latter. But you are much more lucky than the Tarentinians, for you amuse yourself, not for a few days, but the whole year round, offending, instead of foreign ambassadors, your Emperor, and this because of the beard on his chin, and of his effigy on the coins. Well done, O wise citizens, and both ye who are the authors of the jeers and ye who hear them and are amused by them! Because it is evident that it gives as much pleasure to those who crack the jokes as to those who listen to them. I congratulate you on your concord; you are indeed an united city, so that

it would not be either convenient or desirable to repress that which is irrepressible in the youths. It would really be a decapitation of liberty if men were not to be allowed to say and do what they please. Therefore, it being well understood that in all things there must be liberty, you have allowed the women to act according to their pleasure, so that, in their relationship with you, they know no restraint. Then you left to them the education of the children, fearing that, being submitted to a more severe discipline, they would become similar to slaves, and would learn while young to respect the old, and, by adopting this bad habit, end by respecting even the magistrate, finally becoming perfect not as men, but as slaves, wise, temperate, and educated, and thus be wholly ruined. Now, what do the women do? They lead their sons to their altars through the seductions of pleasure,[1] which is the most powerful and acceptable instrument, not only with men, but with wild animals. O ye happy ones, who in this manner have rebelled against all servitude, first towards the gods, then towards the laws, and thirdly, towards those who are the custodians of the laws! But it would be foolish on our part, as the gods do not concern themselves with this city of the free and do not punish it, to be angry or displeased about it. For, as you know, the insults of the city wound us

[1] The Christian altars are here indicated. Note the awful insinuation.

as well as the gods. It is said that neither the 'Ch' nor the 'K' have ever done injury to the city.—This wise riddle of yours was a hard nut to crack, but, having found interpreters, we were informed that those letters were the initials of names, and stood one for Christ (*Χριστός*,) the other for Constantius (*Κονστάντιος*). Now let me speak to you openly and without reserve. Constantius is guilty of one wrong against you, and that is of not having murdered me after creating me Cæsar. May the gods concede to you, and to you alone among all the Romans, the enjoyment of many men like Constantius, and, above all, the insatiability of his friends! . . . I have, however, offended the greater part of you, I should say all—the Senate, the merchants, and the people. The people are angry against me, because being for the greater part, if not entirely, atheistic,[1] they see I am wholly devoted to the traditional rites of divine worship; those in power because they are prevented from selling their wares at usurious prices, and all are discontented to a man; for, although I have not deprived them of their dancers and their theatres, still I show less interest in them than I do in the frogs of the marshes. Is it not, therefore, natural that I should scold myself as I offer you so many reasons for disliking me?"

And here Julian relates with much wit and subtle irony the episode of Cato's visit to Antioch,

[1] By atheism, Julian intends here Christianity.

and the insults offered him by the citizens, and then continues:[1] "It is not to be wondered at that to-day I receive from you the same treatment, for, as compared with him, I am much more rough, hard, and uncivilised than the Celts are as compared with the Romans. Because he, having been born in Rome, lived there all his life. But I, as soon as I reached the years of manhood, was consigned to the Celts, the Germans, and the Hercynian Forest, and there I passed a long time, living as a hunter in the midst of wild beasts, finding that the people around me knew not how to fawn and flatter, but wished to live simply and freely on an equal footing with all. So my early education and the knowledge I attained in early youth of the ideas of Plato and Aristotle rendered me unfit to mix with people, and to look for happiness in diversion. In the first moments of my manly independence I found myself in the midst of the most valorous and warlike among the nations of the earth, who ignore Venus Copulatrix and Bacchus Potator, except for the necessities of propagating the species and slaking their thirst with wine. . . . The Celts became so devoted to me, because of the similarity of our habits, that they were not only willing to take up arms exclusively for me, but gave me their property and forced me to accept it, however little it was my wont to ask, and in all things were ready to obey me. And, what is more important, the fame of my

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 463, 15 sq.

deeds extended from there even to you, and all acclaimed me as valorous, prudent, and just, not only strong in war, but capable of governing in times of peace, affable, and merciful. But you reply to this:—In the first place, thou hast turned everything in the world topsy-turvy—I, on the contrary, have the conviction of never having done so, intentionally or unintentionally. Again, you say that with my beard one can make ropes, and that I wage war against the 'Ch,' and that you regret the 'K.' May the protecting gods of this city concede you a pair of the last-named!"

The indifference of the Antiochians was unconquerable, and a proof of it was the burning of the temple of Apollo—an act said to have been perpetrated by the Christians. The better to characterise this indifference, the author of the *Misopogon* tells us the following little story, in which he is not aware that he is exposing himself to ridicule by the excess of his zeal:[1]—

"In the tenth month falls the feast of your national god, and it is customary for all to assemble at Daphne. I also went, starting from the temple of Jupiter Casius, with the expectation of enjoying the spectacle of your wealth and magnificence. And I pictured to myself, as in a dream, the pomp and the sacrifices, the libations, the sacred dances and incense, and young men around the temple magnificently attired in white vestments, prepared

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 467, 1 sq.

in their souls to adore the god. But when I entered the temple, I did not see either incense or offerings of fruit or victims. I was profoundly astonished at this, and supposed that you were outside waiting for me to appear and give the signal, as I am the great Hierophant. But when I questioned the priest about the sacrifice the city was supposed to offer on the occasion of the annual festival, he replied: 'Well, I bring from my house a goose for the god, but the city has not prepared anything.' Then, overcome by indignation, I addressed to the Council this severe reprimand, which it is, I think, advisable that I should record: 'It is shameful,' I said, 'that such a great city should be so niggardly in the worship of the gods; this would not have happened in the poorest village of the Pontus. The city owns large tracts of land, and notwithstanding this, at the annual feast of its national god, the first time since the clouds of atheism have been dispersed, it does not even offer a bird, when it should offer an ox for each of its wards, or, if this were too much, all should combine to offer in common one bull. In spite of this, every one of you in your own homes is lavish in his banquets and entertainments; I know of many who dissipate all their property in orgies; but when it is a matter of your salvation, and that of your city, no one will sacrifice on his own account, and not even the municipality for the benefit of all. The priest is left severely alone to offer his sacrifice, when in my

opinion, instead, he would have the right to return to his home, carrying with him a part of the great quantity of offerings that you should have presented to the god. The gods command that the priests should honour them by their good conduct, the practice of virtue, and divine service. But it is on the city that falls the obligation of offering sacrifices, individually and as a whole. Now, every one of you permits your wives to carry everything to the Galileans, so that, with your money, they feed the poor, thus making atheism appear most admirable to those in want. And these form the greatest number. And you imagine that you do no evil in omitting to honour the gods. No poor people present themselves at the temples, for there they would find nothing to feed them. But if one of you celebrate a birthday, behold! he prepares a sumptuous dinner and supper, and invites his friends to a well-spread table. But when the annual festival comes round, no one brings oil for the candelabra of the god, neither libations, victims, nor incense. I do not know how a wise man would judge you if he saw your conduct, but I at least am sure that it is displeasing to the gods.'"

This little history narrated by Julian and the discourse that he made are among the most curious and instructive episodes in the small pamphlet that is, in every respect, so interesting. Poor enthusiast! How entirely must he have been disillusioned by

the evidence of facts and the luminous proofs of the complete failure of the restoration he had attempted! Polytheism was dead, and neither nobility of mind nor strength of soul could reanimate it. The very corruption of a great city that was able to maintain at the same time its depraved customs and Christianity, demonstrated that Christianity had lost much of its sacredness. It had, on the other hand, acquired the faculty of adapting itself to the prevailing atmosphere, without which no institution can live. Julian wished to render the world moral by means of a reformed polytheism, transfusing into it those virtues that even, when taught by the Christians, had not been able to put a stop to the social demoralisation. This, from an intellectual point of view, was quite an impossible enterprise, because exhausted polytheism, as we have repeatedly explained, did not offer sufficient basis for a religious reconstruction, and likewise, from the moral point of view, it was impossible, because this alliance of the "Ch" with the "K," as Julian calls it—of Christ and Constantius, of God with depraved society, which to Julian seemed monstrous—responded to the necessities of the time, and was the formula that expressed its exigencies. But how amusing in its comicality is the encounter, in the deserted temple of Apollo, between Julian and the poor priest who is bringing his goose to the god of the Muses! And how symptomatic is the *naïveté* of

Julian in making this episode the text of a speech before the Council of Antioch! And how much light is thrown on the character of Julian's intentions by the fact that this speech is so imbued with Christianity, that, by simply altering a few names and certain secondary particulars, it could have served, and might even at present serve, a bishop who wishes to reprove his flock for their lack of zeal in the divine ministry!

"These," — Julian ironically continues,[1] — "I remember, were my words. . . . And by becoming angry with you, I made a mistake. It would have been much better if I had held my tongue, like many of those who came with me, and neither worried myself nor scolded you. But I was influenced by ill-humour and foolish vanity, since it is incredible that benevolence could have inspired me with those words; the truth is, I was pretending to appear devoted to the gods, and benevolent towards you. And this is ridiculous vanity. I, therefore, overwhelmed you with useless reproofs. And you were right to defend yourselves and exchange positions with me. I abused you before a few, near the altar of the god, at the foot of his statue. You, on the contrary, abused me in the market-place, before the whole population, among the citizens disposed to amuse themselves. . . . Therefore your jokes about this ugly beard, and about him who never

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 469, 12 sq.

did and never will adopt your pretty manners or imitate the style of life which you desire to be adopted by your sovereign, were heard all over the city. But as regards the insults which, privately and publicly, you have showered on me, deriding me in your stanzas, I give you full liberty to use them as you like, considering that I am the first to accuse myself, so that, on this head, I will never do you any harm, and I will neither kill you, nor flog you, nor imprison you, nor fine you. On the contrary, listen to me. Since the wisdom exhibited by myself and my friends has been considered by you as ignoble and displeasing, and as I have not succeeded in presenting you with a spectacle to your taste, I have decided to leave the city and go elsewhere. Not that I, for a moment, suppose that I shall please those among whom I will go, but I consider it best, even though I may not be acceptable to them, and may not seem to them just and good, to distribute among all the blighting shadow of my presence, and not torment too much this city with the bad odour of my temperance and the wisdom of my friends. After all, none of us have bought fields or gardens, nor built houses, nor taken wives, nor have become enamoured of your beauty, nor envied your Assyrian wealth, nor have we distributed among ourselves the prefectures, nor permitted the abuses of the magistrates, nor have we induced the population to incur great and lavish expenses for banquets

and theatres—this population whom we have made so prosperous, and so entirely free from all fear of want that they have time for writing stanzas against those who are the criminal authors of their prosperity. And we did not demand either gold, or silver, nor have we increased the taxes. On the contrary, we have condoned, together with the arrears, a fifth of the usual impost. . . . As it appeared, therefore, to us that all this was praiseworthy, and praiseworthy also the moderation and wisdom of your sovereign, it seemed natural that, because of this, we should have gained your good graces. However, since you are displeased with my rough cheeks and my unkempt hair, my absence from the theatres, my insistence on serious behaviour in the temples, and, above all, my vigilance concerning the tribunals, and the severity with which I repressed the greed of gain so prevalent in the markets, I shall most willingly leave the city. For it would not be easy for me, now that I am nearing mature age, to avoid that which, according to the fable, happened to the kite. It is said that the kite having a voice similar to that of other birds, decided, in its mind, to neigh like a colt. And so, having forgotten how to sing, and not being able to learn how to neigh, it found itself unable to do either, and finished by having a voice worse than that of any other bird. And I believe that the same thing would happen to me, that is to say, I should be neither

rough nor gentle, because I am, please God, nearing, as you see, the moment at which, as the poet of Theos sings, 'the white hairs mix with the black.'

"But by all the gods, and by Jove, protector of this city, you expose yourself to the accusation of being ungrateful. Were you ever offended by me either in private or in public? Or shall we say that, unable to obtain justice, you have used your verses to make our name a by-word in the public squares, and revile us as the actors do Bacchus and Hercules? Is it not perhaps true that I abstained from doing harm to you, but did not prevent you from speaking evil of me, so now I am forced to defend myself against you? What, then, is the cause of your insults and your anger? . . . When I see that I have not in any way diminished the popular expenditure which was at the charge of the Imperial treasury, and have, on the contrary, to no small extent, diminished taxation, is it not natural that your actions should appear enigmatical to me? But of all I have awarded you in common with my other subjects, it is best that I should say nothing, as I might appear to be singing my own praises, while I had promised to cover myself with the vilest vituperation. Let us rather examine my personal conduct, which although not deserving your ingratitude, was, perhaps, inconsiderate and thoughtless, and because I was guilty of many more serious faults than those aforementioned, *i.e.*, the untidiness of my appear-

ance and my reserve in all that concerns love, which, being more true, is naturally more culpable. First I began with great tenderness to sing your praises, without waiting for experience, and without taking the necessary steps towards a mutual understanding, only remembering that you were sons of Greece, and that I myself, though a Thracian by birth, am a Greek by education, I naturally supposed that our affection would be reciprocal. This was the first error, entirely due to my thoughtlessness."

Julian then mentions certain facts of his administration in which he had given evidence of his goodwill, but which, notwithstanding, were taken in bad part by the Antiochians. He then continues:[1]—

"But all this was of little importance, and could not have made the city inimical to me. We now come to the principal fact which gave birth to this bitter hatred. Almost immediately after my arrival, the people, oppressed by the rich, began to shout at me in the theatres: 'Everything is in plenty, but everything is too dear!' The following day, I held a conference with the elders of the city, and sought to persuade them that it was necessary to renounce illicit gains, in order to improve the condition of the citizens and the strangers. The elders promised me that they would study the question, but, after three months of waiting, they had studied it so little that it seemed as if nothing

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 476, 1 sq.

would come of it. When I saw that the people's complaint was well-founded, and that the market was suffering, not for lack of merchandise, but on account of the rapacity of the proprietors, I established and decreed a just price for all things. There was abundance of all, of wine, of oil, and of the rest; but grain was lacking, on account of the drought which had caused a very short crop. For this I sent to Chalcis, to Hierapolis, and to the other surrounding cities, and had forty myriads of measures [of grain] imported here. All this having been consumed, I ordered, first five thousand; then seven thousand; and, lastly, ten thousand of those measures called 'modia,' and besides, all the grain that had come to me from Egypt I handed over to the city, making the same price for fifteen 'modia' as had at first been demanded for ten. . . . In the meanwhile, what were the rich people doing? They secretly sold at a high price the grain they had in their fields, and by their private consumption aggravated the general condition.[1] . . . I, therefore, fell from your good graces, because I would not permit that wine, fruit, and vegetables should be sold to you for their weight in gold, or that, at your expense, the grain stored away in the granaries of the rich should be turned into gold and silver. . . . I well knew that, in so doing, I would not

[1] See for this episode of the price of provisions, Liban., Ἐπιτάφ. 587, 10, and Autobiog., 85, 5.

please all, but that was not of the slightest importance to me, since I considered it my duty to come to the aid of the people, and of the strangers who had come here for the love of me, and of the magistrates who were with me. But now that it is best for us to go away, and as the city is of one opinion concerning me,—some hate me, and others, though fed by me, are ungrateful,—I also will go and establish myself among another race and another nationality. . . . But why are we hateful to you? Because, perhaps, we have fed you with our money, that which, until now, has never happened to any city? And fed you splendidly! And did we not punish the thieves when caught red-handed? Allow me to remind you of one or two facts, so that it might not be said that all this is mere rhetoric and the figment of my imagination. It was asserted that there existed three thousand lots of uncultivated lands, and you were asking for them. When you got them, they were apportioned to those who did not need them. I started an investigation, and found it to be true. So, by taking this land away from those who unjustly had possession of it, and not troubling myself about the unpaid taxes (although they ought to have paid them, even more than the others), I devoted the land to the most important and urgent needs of the city. In this way, the breeders of race-horses have, free from taxes, three thousand lots of land, and this through me. And yet you seem to believe that by

punishing thieves and evil-doers I am turning the world upside down. Thus my speech returns to where it had started. I have only myself to blame for my many ills, because I bestowed my favours on those who did not appreciate them. And this is occasioned by my thoughtlessness, not by your free-mindedness. In the future I will manage to be more prudent in my actions regarding you. And to you may the gods grant the same benevolence as you have shown towards me, and the same honour as that which you have publicly offered me!"

With this last shot, Julian closes his bitter satire. In the last part it seems to us that the literary value is weakened, and that anger has taken the place of irony in the hand of the writer. But it is always extremely interesting, because it reveals with practical examples Julian's foresight and administrative zeal—a zeal that sometimes overstepped the limits of prudence, and transgressed the laws of public economy.

From this, it does not appear that it was exclusively religious and moral reasons that produced the profound dissension between Julian and the Antiochians. There was also a misunderstanding, or, we had better say, a disillusion, the fault of which is to be attributed to the ignorance of economic laws which was universal during the reign of Julian. We must here recognise that the

administrative prudence and unerring insight into the true state of things which had guided Julian so well during his government of Gaul, failed him entirely, perhaps owing to his excessive desire to curry favour with the Antiochians and open a way to obtain a greater influence over their souls. As soon as he arrives in Antioch, Julian hears the populace loudly complaining of the high price of provisions. He examines the circumstances, and feels convinced that the principal cause is the greed of gain on the part of the proprietors and merchants, so he invites the municipal authorities to arrange the matter. But three months elapse, and these do not arrive at any conclusion on the subject. So Julian steps in, and fixes for all provisions a price that is not to be exceeded, and, as the corn crop has been very deficient, he imports from other places enormous quantities of grain, and fixes the price, which is much inferior to that which is necessitated by the commercial conditions of the moment. This economic violence of the Emperor had the inevitable result of augmenting the ills which he wished to diminish. The market of Antioch was, of course, very soon cleared of those provisions which were obliged to be sold at a price which did not suit the vendors. The rich proprietors sold their grain at exorbitant prices outside Antioch, and bought for their use in Antioch that which the Emperor ordered to be sold at absurdly low prices. This caused an immense immigration

from the country to the city, and, in fact, a general disorder, which upset all things, much to the disgust and anger of the highest class of proprietors and merchants, thus rendering the Emperor highly unpopular, while he, in his turn, attributed to party prejudice and perversity of spirit that which actually was only the necessary consequence of a great blunder. Julian's intentions were undoubtedly kind, and inspired by a profound sentiment of equity. And we can well understand how Libanius, in his discourse to the Antiochians, by which he tries to persuade them to repent of their conduct towards the Emperor, is able to say : " I could have wished that you would have admired the initiative of the Emperor, however great might be the difficulties, because he was giving proof of a generous soul, and wished to succour poverty, and thought it a painful condition of affairs that some should revel in plenty, whilst others absolutely lacked the necessaries of life, so that, in a flourishing market, the poor should have no better consolation than that of witnessing the pleasures of the rich." [1] But this good intention, applied in complete ignorance of economic laws, simply ended by baulking its own ends.

In the circles by which Julian was surrounded, the Christians were held responsible for the difficulties and opposition that the Emperor had found in Antioch. The discourse of Libanius, which we

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, i. 492, 15.

have mentioned above, is, on this head, most interesting. It is entirely based on the premise that the true authors of the opposition of the Antiochians to Julian are the Christians, and that the only possible way to effect a reconciliation is an open conversion to paganism. Libanius never names the Christians, as if it were repugnant to him to call attention to a sect so odious and wicked; but the allusion is continual. It is the Christians who secretly instigated the Antiochians to revolt against the economic arrangements of the Emperor; the Christians who prevent the citizens from expressing their repentance by abandoning the theatres, the public games, and the habit of loafing, so general in Antioch, and returning to the exercise of acts inspired by true piety. "Do not deceive yourselves"—exclaims Libanius[1]—"it is not by prostrating yourselves on the ground, nor by waving olive branches, nor by crowning yourselves with garlands, nor by shouts, nor by embassies, nor by sending a most eloquent orator, that you will be able to calm his indignation, but rather by renouncing your bad habits, and by consecrating the city to Jove and the other gods, with whom, long before you saw the Emperor, you were well acquainted, even when children at school, by studying Homer and Hesiod. Now you acknowledge that these poets play a most important part in education, and you make the children learn by heart and recite

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, i. 502, 1 sq.

their verses. However, in things of greater importance, you seek other teachers, and now that the temples are opened, you run away from them, although you so greatly grieved when they were closed. And if any one quotes Plato or Pythagoras to you, you bring forward, as your authorities, your mother and your wife, and the cellarman and the cook, and you prate of your 'now ancient faith,' yet you are not ashamed of all this, but allow yourself to be taken in tow by those who should be subservient to your orders, and you seem to see in the circumstance of having thought evil from the beginning the necessity to think evil unto the end. Just as if a person who has the measles as a child should keep the disease all his life. But why should I prolong this speech? The choice is yours: either continue to be hated, or obtain a double advantage, by acquiring the favour of the sovereign, and by recognising the gods who truly govern in heaven. You are in a position to help yourselves while giving pleasure to others. In appearance you give, in reality you receive."

Libanius wishes to see Antioch reconverted to paganism and truly penitent. At this price he hopes to obtain pardon for the insults of which they have been culpable towards the Emperor. Christianity is, for Libanius, the greatest obstacle, not only to a return to the ancient faith, but also to the expurgation of evil habits and the purification of the morals of the city. And we can see that,

even in the fourth century, in a city in which Christianity was most widely diffused, the strength of the new religion lay in the lower strata of society and in feminine influence. How characteristic is this contrast between the high culture of the intellectual aristocracy and the humility of the forces opposed to it! In this the history of nascent Christianity is truly betrayed. Plato and Pythagoras, invoked by the partisans of the ancient creeds, found arrayed against them the women of the house, the cellarman and the cook. To these rhetoricians, to these philosophers, wholly imbued with Hellenic art and thought, it appeared scandalous, absurd, and ridiculous, this contrast between the highest manifestations of human intelligence and the fantastic and worthless lucubrations of ignorant old women and most abject slaves. However, Libanius and Julian, blinded by the glorious rays of expiring Hellenism, were terribly short-sighted. Four centuries of Christianity had taught them nothing. They believed religion to be a matter of reason, and they were aghast at the thought that the affirmations of the cellarman and of the cook were worth more than those of Plato, and they did not perceive that the former, however rude they might be, came through the cognisance of a living God, and the latter, however sublime, were only the presentment of phantoms exhausted and lifeless.

The *Misopogon* is one of the most important

documents, and the best adapted to help us to penetrate the intimate signification of the attempt initiated by Julian. Although the truth has been concealed and purposely misconstrued by Christian polemics, the fact—though apparently paradoxical, is, nevertheless, true—that Julian was moved by an essentially moral intention. Christianity had, in no way, changed or improved the moral condition of men. Christian Antioch was on a par with pagan Antioch, if not worse. Corrupt customs, orgies, theatres, dancers and mimes—this was the spectacle offered by Christian Antioch. And Julian awakened in them an intense aversion, because the pagan Emperor opposed the most severe morality and virtue to the vices of his Christian subjects. The *Misopogon* makes clear to us the fact that Julian wished to save Hellenism which was being destroyed by Christianity together with its traditions of religion and patriotism; but Julian also hoped to find in Hellenism that moral force which would be sufficient to reform evil habits, and effect a complete regeneration of mankind—a force that the Christians themselves had not been able to develop from the principles which they had proposed. The reception that the corrupt Antiochians gave to the exhortations of the Emperor—a reception most vividly described by the Emperor himself—is the strongest proof of the Utopian character of the attempt. Moralised polytheism would have failed in the effort to re-

generate mankind, just as Christianity had failed. Man remained what he was, according to the intellectual condition of the times. Religion has neither the force nor the possibility of controlling human passions; but it is rather the passions that bend and adapt religion, whatever it may be, to their invincible exigencies.

THE SOVEREIGN AND THE MAN

In the course of our study the singular nature of this enthusiastic prince has already appeared to us in all its brilliancy. This prince, who on the throne of the Cæsars, by attempting to realise an impossible ideal, foolishly dissipated powers of mind and soul which, had they been liberated from religious preoccupations, might have made him a truly great emperor. If Julian's reign had been a long one, and if he had devoted himself entirely to the defence and organisation of the empire, he certainly could not have arrested, but might have retarded, the fatal decadence of the ancient world, and perhaps prevented that terrible catastrophe by which it was overwhelmed—the invasion of the barbarians.

Julian's apparition on the Imperial throne may be compared with that of a brilliant and evanescent meteor. He did not, therefore, have time to leave on things and facts, the lasting imprint of his personality. If his memory only lived in the caricatures sketched by the Christian writers, and if he were exclusively to be judged from these, one would suppose that his life-work was restricted

to the war he waged against Christianity—in short, that he was a hateful and infamous man. Fortunately, his writings remain, which are a genuine reflection of his intentions, his character, and of the qualities and defects of his noble spirit. It is true that Libanius and Ammianus Marcellinus have both furnished proofs of the admiration that Julian excited in his contemporaries. But Libanius is prejudiced, because he also was much interested and compromised in the enterprise of the polytheistic restoration, and Ammianus Marcellinus is not a sufficiently powerful writer to be opposed to Gregory of Nazianzus, to Socrates, Sozomenes, and to all the Catholic traditions. So Julian's genial figure has been handed down to posterity, bearing the brand of apostasy, and, from a psychological and historical point of view, the most curious and interesting fact of all seems to have been lost sight of, namely, that this accursed apostate, who attempted to suffocate Christianity, was, in all respects, an essentially virtuous man, and far superior to any of those men who appeared on the horizon of public life during the Lower Empire. The good Ammianus Marcellinus, in the course of his panegyric on Julian, after having narrated his heroic death, says that he was always noted for the chastity and temperance of his life, and his prudence in every action—"virtute senior quam ætate, studiosus cognitionum omnium,

censor moribus regendis acerrimus, placidus, opum contemptor, mortalia omnia despiciens."[1] Perfect was his justice tempered by clemency, most admirable his acquaintance with everything pertaining to war and the authority with which he governed his soldiers, unequalled the valour with which he fought, always among the first, encouraging his troops and reconducting them in the midst of the fray at the first sign of hesitation. His administration was most wise and moderate, so that he was able to lighten the taxes and settle amicably the litigation between private individuals and the Imperial treasury, restore the miserable financial conditions of the cities, and, finally, stop the frightful disorder that reigned in the extortionate and parasitic government of the empire. But the honest historian does not conceal the failings of his hero; they are, however, very light in comparison with his virtues. A too great hastiness in his decisions, and an excessive facility and abundance of words, which, in our opinion, must have been the reflection of an excessively impressionable temperament, also easily detected among those writings which are the genuine expression of his soul. But Julian's gravest fault, the inevitable consequence of his philosophical system, was his tendency to superstition. This caused him to attribute to the exterior forms of the religion he wished to

[1] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, ii. 40, 29 sq.

restore an importance that often bordered on the ridiculous, and seriously militated against his propaganda. This is the moral picture that Ammianus sketches of his emperor, whom he furthermore describes as having a figure at once strong and agile, a face that had a most singular aspect on account of the shaggy beard that finished in a point,—an object of ridicule to the Antiochians, —yet whose beauty was enhanced by his sparkling eyes, from which beamed the geniality of his mind —"venustate oculorum micantium flagrans, qui mentis ejus argutias indicabant."

But before studying Julian from his writings, which are undoubtedly the most trustworthy source, we must examine once more the descriptions given of him by his two contemporaries, Libanius and Gregory of Nazianzus—the first with the idea of exalting his memory, the second with the intention of reviling him and bespattering him with mud. In the course of this study we have largely borrowed from these writers, but we may still be able to gather some more interesting items of information.

We begin by observing that, in the lamentations of Libanius over the death of Julian, it is impossible not to recognise the expression of a true and profound sentiment, which is intensified if we consider that the *Necrologia* and the *Monodia* were written when all traces of the attempt to restore paganism had disappeared,

when Christianity once more held sovereign sway in the Court and among the people, and when the expression of such grief might prove a great danger to the writer. Libanius exclaims:[1] "How can we reconcile ourselves to the thought that the infamous Constantius, after having ruled over the earth that he contaminated for forty years, was only carried off by illness? And he who renewed the sacred laws, reorganised good principles, rebuilt the dwellings of the gods, replaced the altars, recalled the company of the priests who were hiding in darkness, restored the statues, sacrificed herds of sheep and oxen, now in the Imperial palace, and again outside it, sometimes by day and sometimes by night, leaving his life entirely in the hands of the gods, who after filling for a short time a minor position in the empire, and for a still shorter time the highest office,[2] was taken away, so that the earth which had just begun to appreciate such great virtue was left unsatisfied. . . . At least, if this multitude of evils had not so suddenly overwhelmed us! But good fortune had no sooner appeared to us than it rapidly vanished as if in flight. By Hercules, this is too cruel, and must be the work of the demons!" Then Libanius, after recalling the desolation of the army when Julian, mortally wounded but

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, 510, 5.

[2] The minor position is that of Cæsar; the highest, that of Augustus.

still alive, was transported from the battlefield to his tent, says that the Muses were weeping for the death of their pupil, and that misfortune had encompassed the earth, the sea, and the air, and exclaims: "And all of us weep, each one the loss of his particular hopes: the philosopher, over the man who explained the doctrines of Plato; the rhetorician, over the orator eloquent of speech and skilful in criticising the discourses of others; the pleaders, a judge wiser than Rhadamanthus. O unfortunate peasants who will be the prey of those whose sole object is to despoil you! O power of justice already weakened, and of which soon there will only remain the shadow! O magistrates, how much will the dignity of your names be reviled! O battalions of soldiers, you have lost an emperor who in war provided for all your necessities! O laws, with reason believed to have been dictated by Apollo, now trodden under foot! O reason, thou hast almost in the same moment acquired and lost thy sway and vigour! Alas! for the earth's absolute ruin!"[1]

This explosion of grief is in natural contrast to the recital of the hopes and expectations which Julian had aroused. The Emperor, Libanius says, attributed a supreme importance to education; he believed that the doctrine and the worship of the gods should be united by fraternal bonds (*νομίζων ἀδελφὰ λογούς τε καὶ θεῶν ἱερὰ*). To restore

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, 516, 15.

instruction, which was entirely neglected, to its former position of honour, he himself wrote discourses and treatises on philosophy. He also desired that the cities should be governed by men of culture, and as soon as he found a man capable of ruling, he immediately invested him with office. There is indeed a breath of poetic inspiration in the enthusiastic picture that Libanius gives of Julian's journey from Constantinople to Antioch. The Emperor is moved by one dominant thought, the restoration of Hellenism; he enjoys discourses much more than he does gifts; he weeps with emotion, and is consumed by his prodigious activity of mind and of body, and he never neglects a temple, nor leaves unheard a philosopher, rhetorician, or poet. "The garden of wisdom blossomed again"—exclaims Libanius —"and the chances of preferment lay in the acquisition of knowledge. . . . He made all efforts to revive the love of the Muses!"[1] It was truly a "Primavera Ellenica,"[2] a reflowering of Greek thought, customs, and ideas, that reanimated spirits, discouraged and broken by incipient barbarism, and by the predominating tendencies that were in open contradiction to these ideas and customs. In order to comprehend, in its bearing and significance, the restoration attempted by Julian, we must

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, 575, 15.

[2] "Primavera Ellenica" is an allusion to Carducci's well-known poem.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

endeavour to appreciate the emotion of these surviving devotees of a civilisation which was rapidly approaching its sunset, but which they imagined could be restored to its ancient splendour by creating a retrograde movement in its predominant circumstances.

Endowed with the faculty of concentrating his thoughts, and with prodigious activity, Julian was able to respond to the excessive demands made on him in his task of religious reformer, general, and statesman. "When obliged to be present at races," Libanius relates, "Julian gazed abstractedly around, honouring at the same time the festival by his presence, and his own thoughts by being absorbed in them. Neither wrestling, competitions, nor applause could divert him from his meditations. When he gave a banquet, he remained just long enough, so that it could not be said he was absent." [1] Of his activity he gives us this interesting description: "Having always been most abstemious, and never having overloaded his stomach with excessive food, he was, if I may so express it, able to fly from one occupation to the other, and on the same day respond to several ambassadors, despatch letters to the cities, to the commanders of his armies, to friends who were absent and to friends who arrived, listen to the reading of despatches, and examine requests, so that his secretaries were unable to keep pace with the rapidity of his

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, 579, 5.

dictation. . . . His secretaries were obliged to rest, but not he, who passed from one occupation to another. After he had transacted his official affairs, he had luncheon, — he never ate more than was absolutely necessary,—and then sang most melodiously, resting amidst his books, until, in the afternoon, he was once more called to the business of the State. And his supper was even more frugal than his first repast, and his hours of sleep were few, considering the small amount of food. And then came other amanuenses, who had passed their day sleeping, because this succession of service and this resting by turns was indispensable. He changed the form of his work, but he never ceased working, renewing in his actions the transformations of Proteus, alternately appearing in the character of priest, writer, augur, judge, general, and soldier, but always as a saviour!"[1] The cares of state did not prevent him from continuing his favourite studies. In another part, Libanius, addressing himself to Julian, thus exclaims: "Thy great and beautiful and varied culture is not exclusively due to the studies that thou hast made before thou didst become Emperor! But thou continuest to study simply for the love of wisdom. The Empire did not force thee to neglect thy books. The night is still young and thou already singest, awaking earlier than the birds, composing thy discourses, and reading the compositions of others!"

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, 580, 10 sq.

In another part, Libanius breaks out in the following apostrophe to the gods, and it is most interesting because it reveals how many and deep-seated were the illusions cherished by the Hellenistic party who surrounded Julian, and because we seem to hear in it the echo of the enthusiastic conversations that must have taken place at Antioch between the Emperor and Libanius, when the former was preparing to give, by means of his hoped-for victory over the Persians, the definite seal and sanction to the reconstruction of ancient civilisation.

"O gods, O demons, why did ye not ratify your promises? Why did ye not make him happy who knew you? With what could ye reproach him? What was there in his actions that was not praiseworthy? Did he not restore the altars? Did he not build temples? Did he not honour with the greatest solemnity the gods, the heroes, the air, the heavens, the earth, the sea, the fountains, the rivers? Were not your enemies his enemies? Was he not wiser than Hippolytus? Just as Rhadamanthus? More thoughtful than Themistocles? More courageous than Brasidas? Did he not truly save humanity, which was on the point of perishing? Was he not the enemy of the wicked? Merciful to the righteous? Adverse to the overbearing? A friend to the simple-minded? How grand were his enterprises! How many conquests! How many trophies! O end un-

worthy of the beginning! We believed that the whole of Persia would form part of the Roman Empire, governed by our laws, receiving from us its rulers, paying us its tributes, changing its language, altering its style of dress, and cutting the flowing hair. In our mind's eye we saw in Susa sophists and rhetoricians, educating with their great discourses the sons of the Persians, and our temples ornamented with the spoils brought from there, narrating to posterity the magnitude of the victory, and the conquered themselves emulating those who praised the enterprise, admiring this, and not making light of that, congratulating themselves because of some things, and not disdainful of others, and wisdom honoured as it formerly had been, and the tombs of the martyrs give place to temples, and all with one accord crowd around the altars, rebuilt by those who had destroyed them, and the very same who ran away in horror at the sight of blood, offer up sacrifices, and the prosperity of families revived through many causes; by the reduction of taxes, because it is reported that, in the midst of dangers, he had prayed the gods that if the war terminated in a manner that rendered it possible, he would reduce to nothing the public taxes. Ah! the crowd of adverse demons rendered vain all our expectations, and behold! the athlete about to receive the laurel crown is brought to us on his bier! Happy those

who died after him, unhappy those who live! Before him there was night, and after him there is night; his reign was a pure ray of sunlight! O cities that thou hast founded! O cities that thou hast rebuilt! O wisdom that thou hast exalted to the highest honour! O virtue that was thy strength! O justice descended anew from heaven to earth, thence to return immediately to heaven! O radical revolution! O universal happiness, no sooner realised than ended! We suffer like a thirsty man who raises to his lips a cup of fresh and limpid water, but, as it touches them, he sees it snatched away!"[1]

Libanius thus narrates Julian's conversion :—

"As it appeared that, in every respect, he was made to rule, and this being the general opinion of those who knew him, he (the Emperor Constantius) did not wish that his fame should become too widespread among the population of a city wherein were many restless spirits. He, therefore, sent him to live in Nicomedia, a more quiet city. This was the beginning of every good for him and for all the world, for in that city there yet remained a breath of divine science, which with difficulty had escaped the hands of the impious ones. Scrutinising by means of this the occult questions,"—here Libanius addresses himself directly to Julian,—"thou, ennobled by study, hast divested thyself of thy fierce hatred of the gods. When, later, thou

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, 617, 5 sq.

didst go to Ionia, and didst make the acquaintance of a man who is credible and wise,[1] hearing that which he taught concerning those spirits who have created and preserved the universe, and admiring the beauty of philosophy, thou didst taste the most pure of all beverages, and shaking thyself free from error, and, like a lion, breaking thy chains, thou didst liberate thyself from the mist of ignorance, preferring truth to falsehood, the legitimate divinities to the false one, the ancient gods to that one who, some time ago, has perfidiously insinuated himself. Uniting to the companionship of the rhetoricians that of men still more wise (and even here we see the hand of the gods, who, by means of Plato, expanded thy intelligence, so that with high conceptions thou wert able to attain to greatness of action), already strong by thy flow of words and by the science of things, even before thou couldst promote the interests of religion, thou didst let it be understood that thou wouldst not neglect them when the occasion presented itself, lamenting over that which had been destroyed, grieving over that which had been contaminated, commiserating that which had been oppressed, making evident to those near thee, future salvation in the present grief."[2]

After describing Julian's action in Gaul, Libanius thus exclaims: "Certainly thou couldst

[1] Probably Libanius here alludes to Maximus.

[2] Liban., *op. cit.*, 408, 5 sq.

not have done all this without the help of Minerva. But from the time that thou didst leave Athens, the goddess assisting thee in counsel and action as she had once assisted Hercules to overcome the monstrous dog, thou wert able to comprehend all things by means of reason, and didst make the best use of thy arms, not remaining seated in thy tent to await the reports of the battle. Thou wert, instead, ever to be found in the van of the army, inciting thy troops to follow thee, flourishing thy lance, brandishing thy sword, calling them on by the gesture of thy uplifted arm, and encouraging thy soldiers with the blood of the enemy ; a king in council, a leader in all enterprises, a hero in battle!"[1]

The pages of Libanius present to us a figure both attractive and genial. A man of spirit and courage, full of enthusiasm for all the most noble ideals, generous and heroic, the young Emperor appears truly worthy of the admiration and love with which his teachers, his friends, and his soldiers encompassed him. But certainly Julian lacked balance. His fervid and disordered imagination was combined, in the most extraordinary manner, with all the pedantry of the rhetorician and formalist. On the other hand, however, there is so much heroism in his heart, he is so overflowing with the vigour and boldness of youth, he embodies so thoroughly the living spirit of Hellenic civilisation, that his personality seems to be liberated

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, 413, 10 sq.

from all its errors and defects, or, at least, they are concealed by the pure rays of a dazzling light. But one of these blemishes remains, and is but too evident, and dominates even in the portrait sketched by Libanius. This blemish was superstition. We have already noticed this in our remarks concerning Neo-Platonism; antiquity was, above all, superstitious. For it to have been otherwise, human thought must have followed the direction indicated by Democritus, Epicurus, and Lucretius. On the contrary, it chose the opposite direction, and, by means of Neo-Platonism, it ended by placing the superrational and the supernatural above reason and nature, that is to say, it refused to seek the logical causes of effects, and saw in all things the continual intervention of an absolute arbiter. No one more than Julian pressed onward in this fatal direction, none, therefore, more ardent than he in promoting those exercises of the cult which he believed would give him the favour of the gods. "On all sides"—exclaims Libanius—"there were altars, and fires, and blood, and reek of sacrifices, and incense and expiations, and soothsayers free from all restraint. There were pilgrimages and singing on the summits of the mountains, and oxen that he (Julian), sacrificing with his own hands, offered to the gods, and with the meat of which he afterwards fed the people. But as it was inconvenient for the Emperor to go every day from the Imperial palace to visit the temples, and as at the

same time there is nothing more profitable than constant intercourse with the gods, he had erected, inside the palace, a sanctuary to the god who brings the day, and he participated and made the others participate in those Mysteries in which he had been initiated, and he raised separate altars to each of the gods. And the first thing he did as soon as he arose from his bed was to unite himself by sacrifice to the gods."[1] And in the *Monodia*, deploring the death of his hero, he thus asks: "Which of the gods should we accuse? All equally, because they have neglected the care of that beloved head, a care due to it, in return for the many prayers and the many offerings, the continual perfumes, the quantity of blood shed by night and by day. He was not devoted to one and negligent of the others, but to all those who have been made known to us by the poets: the generators and the generated, gods and goddesses, superior and inferior, he offered libations, and their altars were filled to overflowing with oxen and sheep."[2]

Furthermore, he was especially devoted to the science of augury, and Libanius relates that he was so expert in it that when he was present, the augurs were obliged to adhere strictly to the truth, because his eyes were able to scrutinise and discover all.[3] And we have already seen that, in all his undertakings, he was accompanied by

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, 564, 15 sq. [2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, 508, 10.
[3] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, 582, 10.

numbers of augurs, and that he never attempted anything without having first examined the entrails of the victims, and the birds in their flight. And honest Ammianus, with his good sense, recognises that the Emperor was addicted to an excessive use of omens, and was more a superstitious than a legitimate observer of the cult — "præsagiorum sciscitationi nimiæ deditus . . . superstitiosus magis quam sacrorum legitimus observator."[1]

To us all this seems perfectly odious, and it would appear that, in the re-establishment of sanguinary sacrifices, and in his attempt to revive puerile and absurd rites, he was really proving himself a reactionary. One of the most evident merits of Christianity is especially that of having purified worship and of having freed the altars from the repulsive spectacle of victims with their throats cut. But if we examine the inwardness of this question, we shall find that the conception of a sacrifice, redeeming the sins and obtaining the pardon of the god, exists on both sides, collective and symbolical in Christianity, real and uninterrupted in paganism. Christianity—we do not mean that of the Gospel, which simply posed the sublime idea of a paternal God, but metaphysical and dogmatic Christianity—has introduced into the cult offered to the divinity new forms, and much better ones, but it has not originated any new ideas. The principle, essentially superstitious, of an omnipotent

[1] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, ii. 42, 30.

arbiter, to be appeased by dint of victims, had not been eradicated. Julian, even on this score, was neither reactionary nor progressive. He did nothing else but live and act according to the intellectual environment of his times.

Notwithstanding that he was deeply tainted with superstition and bigotry, Julian, as depicted by Ammianus and the enthusiastic Libanius, presents a most attractive figure, both as man and sovereign. We are drawn to lament his errors and misfortunes, and feel for him that sympathy and admiration which is always inspired by men of genius. Gregory of Nazianzus presents a figure absolutely the reverse, and were we to give credence to his description, we should believe Julian to have been a wicked man, and one deficient in intelligence. The hero of the enterprises against Gaul and Persia, the man of severe habits and principles, the brilliant and versatile writer, is transformed, in the Discourses of Gregory, into "that dragon, that apostate, that artful schemer, that Assyrian, that common enemy and corrupter of all, who has poured out on the earth his ire and his threats, and has hurled even up to heaven his iniquitous words."[1] And the writings of Julian are "malicious discourses and jests, their only strength being found in their profaneness, and in the wisdom, if I may so say, of a fool."[2]

[1] Gregor., *op. cit.*, 49.

[2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, 50. *ἀσοφος ἵν' αὕτως ὀνομάσω, σοφία.*

So great was Gregory's hatred of Julian that the pious writer, in order to give greater force to the accusations of perfidy which he brought against him, did not hesitate to become the enthusiastic apologist of the Emperor Constantius. Here we have an intentional and deplorable concealment of the truth. For we must remember that the Arian Constantius had been not only a fierce persecutor of the pagans, but also of Orthodoxy, so that the great Athanasius had to bear the brunt of his anger. But Gregory is so anxious to exalt Julian's enemy, that he dares to excuse him, the persecutor of his brothers in Christ, asserting that the Emperor was only influenced by his desire to bring back unity into the divided Church, and in saying this, he forgets that union with the Arian errors was detestable and fatal.[1] And he lessens the importance of the heresy of Constantius, by attributing it to the influence of others. It seemed, he says, that Constantius inflicted a great shock on Orthodoxy.[2] But this appearance must be accredited to those around him, who had deceived a simple soul overflowing with virtue. And, after all, the polemist exclaims, we cannot forget that he is the son of the Emperor who gave the foundation of Imperial power to the Christian faith.[3]

[1] Gregor., *op. cit.*, 64.

[2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.* *τὴν ὀρθὴν δόξαν παρακινεῖν ἔδοξεν.*

[3] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.* *τὸν βαλλόμενον τὴν κρηπίδα τῆς βασιλικῆς τῷ χριστιανισμῷ δυναστείας καὶ πίστεως.*

And we cannot forget that Constantius, when he died, left Christianity all powerful.[1] There is no greater proof of the blindness of passion, and also of the moral distortion into which Christianity had fallen, than this praise and exaltation of a tyrannical, heretical, and cruel emperor by one of the princes of the Church.

In Gregory's Discourses, Julian becomes a sort of infernal demon, around whom all sorts of dark and stupid legends have accumulated. Once, while he was sacrificing, the viscera of the victim took the form of a crowned cross; the spectators were terrified, but the wicked apostate explained the apparition, saying that it was a symbol of the discomfiture of Christianity.[2] On another occasion, Julian, guided by a master of the sacred Mysteries, descends into a cavern. And behold! he hears the most awful noises, and most horrible phantoms appear to him. Julian, overcome by fear, almost involuntarily, as a defence against those foul demons, recurs to that exorcism to which he has been accustomed since his childhood, and makes the sign of the cross. Immediately the noises cease, and the demons disappear. Twice is this strange experience repeated, and each time Julian proves the power of the Christian exorcism. He is deeply impressed, but the master of iniquity, who is near him, says to him: "What dost thou fear? The demons dis-

[1] Gregor., *op. cit.*, 119. [2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, 70 sq.

appear, not because they are afraid of the cross, but because they despise it." And Julian, persuaded by this affirmation, again descends with him into the cavern. Legends absurd but symptomatic, because they reveal the bent of popular imagination, and at the same time the credulity and cunning of the Christian controversialists, who transformed the Utopian Hellenist, devoted to naught but Homer and Plato, into a demoniacal figure, destined to inspire with a nameless terror the timorous Christians of the lower classes.

Gregory's greatest effort is to make Julian appear as a ferocious persecutor. The defenders of Christianity were especially irritated by the moderation and tolerance with which Julian imagined he could lead the world back to ancient Hellenism. To these apologists it seemed impossible to oppose Christianity except by violence, and they saw in this attempt an infamy and a serious peril. And thus the real aim of Gregory's discourses is to demonstrate that, in spite of appearances, Julian had persecuted the Christians. And in this demonstration Gregory proves himself a disputant of singular ability. He employs, with great efficacy, the weapons of sarcasm and irony, and often arrives at the truth. That Julian's clemency was undoubtedly tainted with hypocrisy is very natural. We may also affirm, without doing the Emperor injustice, that the tolerance of which he so often boasts in

his letters was not so much due to an impartial judgment and a true respect for the opinions of others, as to the conviction that tolerance was a surer means than persecution to attain the aim so dear to his heart. But Gregory does not, in the slightest, appreciate the advantage that accrued to the Christians from the attitude of the pagan Emperor. "Julian"—he says—"arranged things in such a way that he persecuted, without appearing to do so, and we suffered without receiving the honour that would have been due to us, if we had been seen to suffer for the sake of Christ."[1] The difference between Julian and the other emperors who were persecutors, is, that the latter persecuted openly, and in a spirit manifestly tyrannical, so that they gloried in the violence they exercised. Julian, instead, in his persecutions is miserably astute and despicable.[2] "Julian"—affirms Gregory, with an acuteness which, though poisoned with hate, at least partially succeeds in reproducing the truth—"divided his power into two parts, that of persuasion and that of violence. This last, being the most inhuman, he left to the rabble of the cities, whose audacity is without bounds, because unreasonable and most fierce in its violence. And this without public decrees, but simply by not preventing the riots. The office, more benign and more worthy of a prince, that of persuasion, he kept for himself. But he did not succeed in

[1] Gregor., *op. cit.*, 72. [2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, 73.

maintaining this to the end, since it is against the laws of nature, for the same reason that it is impossible for the leopard to change its spots, or the Ethiopian his dusky skin. . . . So he was everything but merciful towards the Christians: even his humanity was inhuman,[1] his exhortations, violence; his courtesy, an excuse for cruelty, because he wished to appear to have the right to act with violence, from the moment that it was impossible for him to succeed by persuasion."[2]

In these words of Gregory there is unquestionably a foundation of truth, cleverly employed by the disputant, who, with an acute opportunism, exaggerated the facts, and described as a deliberate stratagem, and as premeditated actions, that which was the natural outcome of the situation. Following the thread of this necessarily hostile interpretation, Gregory reviews nearly all those actions of Julian with which we are already acquainted, and for which we have proved that the Emperor was not directly responsible, or, if responsible, that he was justified by provocation; and he naturally makes these so many causes of accusation against his enemy. All this is, of course, artificial and partisan. But this is not the case with the admirable invective in which the orator compares the positive Christian virtues with the fallacious and apparent virtues[3] of

[1] Gregor., *op. cit.*, 73. καὶ ἦν λίαν ἀπάνθρωπον αὐτῷ τὸ φιλάνθρωπον.
[2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, 74.
[3] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, 76 sq.

the pagans, and breaks out in a pæan of victory. Here speaks a man inflamed with zeal and enthusiasm for the truth of the cause he is defending. When he alludes to the martyrs and their glory, Gregory finds words of the greatest power. But more interesting still is that part of the speech where Gregory, with an originality of thought and intensity of feeling no longer possessed by the exhausted orators of Athens and Antioch, announces the essential antitheses of Christianity, which are the natural effect of the contrast between the pessimistic conception of the present world and the optimistic conception of the future one;—those antitheses, by which the true Christian glories in his earthly sufferings as a process of initiation into the felicity of heaven. These antitheses had their most sublime expression in the divine paradox of the beatitudes of the Gospels. Gregory marvels that Julian did not yield to the fascination of such a profound and novel doctrine, and attributes the resistance of the hardened pagan to obstinacy, stupidity, and perfidious designs. Gregory was mistaken. He should rather have sought the cause of Julian's inexplicable resistance in the fact that these beautiful antitheses no longer represented the true conditions of Christianity, by means of which, at that time, men no longer hoped to arrive exclusively at a future celestial felicity, but rather at an earthly felicity, and besides, that it presented a deplorable display of discord and covetousness.

Certainly, it was the moral conception, culminating in the apotheosis of the humble and the unfortunate, that gave to Christianity its strength and its victory. But, in the fourth century, this conception had become a simple rhetorical expression, to which the reality in no way responded. It was, therefore, natural that a soul educated in the worship of ancient wisdom and virtue should find these most luminous in comparison with the others, and that it should see in a return to the ancient faith the salvation of the world.

The Christian disputant is certainly in the right when he says that it was not the act of a wise politician to attempt to lead the world back to polytheism, because at that time the Christian movement was already too widely diffused, and there was no possibility of arresting it. Constantine's successors could do nothing but follow its direction. A return, even in a more moderate form, to the policy of Diocletian would have still more weakened the empire, by rendering the majority of the citizens inimical to it. Gregory, however, exaggerates when he speaks of the opposition encountered by Julian in his attempt. As we have already seen, the rural districts had remained, for the most part, faithful to paganism, and continued so for a long time; for full thirty years after the death of Julian, Libanius, in his great discourse, "About the Temples," could appeal to the Emperor Theodosius, supplicating him to protect the rural temples from

the destructive fury of the Christians.[1] The army ever remained wholly and securely in the hands of Julian, although Gregory affirms that he abolished the standard that bore the sign of the cross.[2] It is true that Gregory relates a great scandal that took place in the camp. According to him, the Christian soldiers presented themselves before the Emperor, and asked to be allowed to return the gifts they had received from him on the occasion of his anniversary, because they found that by burning a grain of incense at the moment of receiving the gifts, they had committed an act of pagan worship. Julian only punished the rebels with exile, not wishing, says Gregory, to make real martyrs of those who were already such in intention.[3] But, in this account, Gregory has certainly magnified some isolated episodes into proportions of a solemn scene, because the truth is that, in Julian's army, there was never the slightest tendency to breach of discipline. If there is one trait above all others that proves the extent of the power of attraction possessed by the young Emperor, it is the ardent and boundless devotion that his soldiers had for him. During the arduous and exhausting campaigns of Gaul and Germany, in the daring and hazardous adventures of his rebellion against Constantius, in his grand and desperate

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, ii. 164, 5 sq. [2] Gregor., *op. cit.*, 75.
[3] Gregor., *op. cit.*, 85. *ἵνα μὴ μάρτυρας ἐργάσεται τοὺς ὅσον τὸ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς μάρτυρας.*

campaign against Persia, the soldiers followed him with enthusiasm and unswerving fidelity. But it has never been said that the Christian soldiers, although there must have been many of them in the army, ever hesitated to obey orders. If even the suspicions of Libanius and Sozomenes were true, that Julian was killed by a javelin hurled by the hand of a Christian, the mystery in which the matter was shrouded and the secrecy of the plot are the strongest proof that no plans of rebellion could have had the slightest possibility of success among Julian's devoted troops.

One of the acts of persecution attributed to the Emperor by Gregory was the famous School Law. But we have elsewhere gauged the value of his judgment on this score. Let us rather stop for a moment to consider the manner in which he attacks Julian, because he imitated in the institutions of his reformed polytheism the institutions of Christianity. Gregory is forced to recognise the humanity of Julian's initiative, but he refuses to admit the honesty of his intentions. Julian, says Gregory, desired to imitate that Assyrian general who, being unsuccessful in his attempt to take Jerusalem, attempted to treat with the Hebrews, sweetly speaking Hebrew, in order to seduce them by the harmony of his words. So Julian founded schools, hospitals, and even monasteries, and wished to establish a priestly hierarchy similar to that of the Christians, and exhorted them to exercise charity

towards the poor. "I do not know," Gregory acutely remarks, "if it was a good thing for Christianity that Julian's attempt to Christianise paganism was cut short at its birth, by the death of the Emperor, because if it had continued it would have revealed his ape-like tendencies. The apes, in trying to imitate men, let themselves be caught, and such would also have been his fate, for he would have become entangled in his own nets, since Christian virtues are an intrinsic part of the nature of Christianity, and not such as can be imitated by any of those who wish to follow after us, they being triumphant, not through human wisdom, but by divine power, and by the consistency that comes with time."[1]

The whole of Gregory's first discourse is an attempt to prove that Julian was a persecutor. As this is one of the most interesting points in the personality of this enigmatical Emperor, we will examine it once again.

That Julian ever abandoned this principle of moderation, that rule of conduct which prevented him from having recourse to violence in order to obtain the triumph of his cause, no impartial writer has ever been able to affirm. The most strenuous efforts will never succeed in transforming the Neo-Platonic dreamer into a persecuting sovereign. For all that, a thesis sustained by that acute critic, Rode, and recently revived by the writer (Allard) who

[1] Gregor., *op. cit.*, 102 sq.

has published the latest study on Julian, attempts to prove that, in Julian's actions, there was a tendency to a sort of evolution, so that although he began under the inspiration of great moderation and equanimity of mind, he would, little by little, have become so exasperated that he would finally have arrived at the point of committing acts of severity which, although not exactly proceedings of persecution, were very near akin to them.

It appears to us that this thesis is absolutely artificial, and responds to a preconceived idea. First of all, Julian's reign was so short as to preclude a fundamental evolution of his mind, and, besides, his actions cannot possibly be arranged in that chronological order which would have been necessary in order to deduce the conclusion that Julian was rapidly inclining towards persecution. Thus, one of the acts of the Emperor—an error, according to our opinion, but which only a partisan writer like Gregory could colour with a sinister light so as to make it appear a religious persecution —*i.e.*, the condemnation of the courtiers of Constantius, took place quite at the beginning of his reign, while his edict of disapproval of the Alexandrians for the murder of their Bishop George was written from Antioch. As to the riots, there were many during his short reign, now Christians against pagans, and again the latter against the former. But it is impossible to say that he fomented these insurrections in order to repress the

Christians with the greatest severity. We have seen, on the contrary, that, even in grave cases, he contented himself with inflicting punishments of a purely administrative order.

We must, on the other hand, recognise that it would have been impossible for Julian to have renewed the classic persecution of the preceding emperors. As we have already said, it is now proved that the persecutions of the Christians happened by *cocercitio*, that is to say, through proceedings "*de simple police.*" The Romans did not, in the slightest degree, concern themselves with the doctrines of the Christians, because dogmatic persecution was absolutely unknown to them, and they did not even inquire into the crimes of which the Christians were imagined to be guilty. The Christians were considered as forming a sect dangerous to the State, therefore on certain occasions the Imperial authorities ordered what nowadays is called a "raid," and if the arrested refused to perform the required act of adoration before the image of the Emperor, they were condemned to suffer capital punishment. But these police proceedings are only possible against a slender minority. The day in which the minority becomes in its turn the majority, they rebel, and employ against their ancient adversaries those systems of persecution of which they were for such a long time the victims. And this is exactly the way in which the Christians acted from the moment

that Constantine had given Christianity a legal and recognised status.

Julian, therefore, even if he had wished, could not have persecuted the Christians by means of the ancient systems. And he never attempted to do so. But it is useless to ask from Julian more than he could give. Julian could not become a protector of Christianity. He wished to oppose it, attempted to stop its diffusion, and desired to put in its place Hellenic polytheism. This was his programme, and we cannot expect that his actions should have been in contradiction to it. He could neither favour the Christians nor leave them in possession of the privileges and prerogatives that they had managed to acquire during the half-century of their dominion. The Christians, as we have seen in Sozomenes and Socrates, protested against this return to antiquity. Considering the question from their point of view, they were right; but Julian's conduct because of this was neither that of a persecutor nor even condemnable. It is with such criteria that the administrative rigour of Julian, of which we have already spoken, must be judged. The truth is, Julian had simply re-established the ancient modes of government, and equality between all citizens—a course of action that was necessary to accomplish his programme. In the administration of justice, he was so impartial that it was said that Justice, which had taken refuge in heaven, returned, while he was Emperor, to

earth. And the good Ammianus explicitly tells us that "although Julian sometimes indulged in inopportune questions regarding the religion of each of the litigants, none of his statements of cases were found to be contrary to the truth, nor could he ever be upbraided with the reproof of having deviated, either on account of religious questions or of any other considerations, from the narrow path of equity—*nec argui unquam potuit ob religionem, vel quodcumque aliud ab æquitatis recto tramite deviasse.*"[1] This explicit declaration from the impartial historian, who never concealed the faults and blemishes of his hero, and who, furthermore, is quite impervious to all religious fanaticism, decides the question in the most unmistakable manner. Julian, except in the case of his personal antagonism to Athanasius, never assumed the part of a persecutor. All the acts that his enemies and the ecclesiastical writers, Gregory, Socrates, Sozomenes, Rufinus, point out as proofs of persecution, are only measures intended to deprive the Christian Church, without violence, of the privileges which it had arrogated to itself. Now, the idea of giving to these actions the logical sequence of the aim which Julian wished to attain, the appearance of a persecution, by which Christianity could be forcibly eradicated and replaced by paganism, has to us the effect of a most partial judgment—a judgment totally lacking in objectivity, seeking

[1] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, i. 288.

a fault with the pre-established intention of finding it.

The second of Gregory's two virulent discourses is a cry of joy for Julian's catastrophe. The terrible orator heaps on the head of the fallen all the insults suggested to him by his fertile imagination, and those which he culls from the inexhaustible store of Biblical literature. In order to express the magnitude of Julian's wickedness, he must be called at the same time Jeroboam, Ahab, Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar. No nature was more ready than his in discovering and devising evil.[1] And this is proved by the favours which he liberally bestowed on the Jews, and the promise that he made to them of rebuilding the Temple of Jerusalem—a promise rendered vain by the miraculous interposition of God. The narration he gives of the campaign against the Persians is most exasperating, because of the unjust and partisan spirit with which it is written. All the admirable preparations and the extraordinary ability by means of which the Emperor triumphantly led his army as far as Ctesiphon, are persistently denied by Gregory, who attributes this success to a stratagem of the Persians—a stratagem designed to lure the enemy to the interior of the country, where they could more easily be defeated; he is perfectly

[1] Gregor., *op. cit.*, III. *οὐ γὰρ ἐγένετο ποριμώτερα φύσις ἐκείνης εἰς κακοῦ εὕρεσιν καὶ ἐπίνοιαν.*

silent concerning Julian's heroism, and he depicts him as a raging lunatic. As to Julian's death, Gregory does not know to whom to attribute the merit of the killing. He makes no allusion to the possibility of its having been the work of a Christian. But he glories in the death of the Emperor, as if it were the salvation of the world, and he relates that Julian had given orders that his body should be secretly thrown into a river, so that it might be believed that he had disappeared and ascended to heaven, and was numbered among the gods! How greatly does party prejudice obscure the judgment and travesty truth! Behold the transformation wrought in the affecting and sublime scene described by Ammianus and Libanius by the hand of an enemy! But if critical sentiment rises in arms against this tempest of unmerited, or at least excessive, abuse, and against this intentional caricature of the historical personality, still, on the other hand, it is impossible to resist the overpowering eloquence of the triumphant orator. The peroration of Gregory's discourse is like the clang of a clarion saluting a victory. "Give me"—he cries—"give me thy Imperial and sophistical discourses, thy irresistible syllogisms, thy meditations. We will compare them with that which untutored fishermen have said to us. But my prophet commands me to silence the echo of thy songs, the sound of thine instruments! . . . Divest thyself, O hierophant, of thine infamous

stole! O priests, robe yourselves with justice, the glorious stole, the immaculate tunic of Christ! Let thy message of dishonour be silenced, and let the message of divine truth resound! Closed must be thy books of falsehood and magic, let us open the books of the prophets and of the apostles! . . . What benefit did accrue to thee from the great armaments thou didst prepare, from the numberless war-machines that were invented, from the many myriads of men, the numerous battalions? Much stronger were our prayers and the will of God!"[1] Gregory exults in the idea of all the torments of the Hellenic Tartarus and of others still worse, applied to Julian, and then exclaims: "These things we tell thee, we to whom thy great and admirable law would have forbidden the right to speak. Thou seest, that though condemned by thy decrees, we do not remain silent, but raise freely on high our voice which curses thy folly! No one dare attempt to stem the cataracts of the Nile falling from Ethiopia into Egypt, nor stop the rays of the sun, even if, for a moment, they are obscured by passing clouds, nor to silence the tongues of the Christians publicly reviling thy conduct! This Basil and Gregory say unto thee, the enemies and opposers of thine attempt, whom thou, knowing to be renowned and famous in the whole of Greece, for their life, their doctrine, and their union, thou didst reserve for the final battle,

[1] Gregor., *op. cit.*, 126.

as a splendid and triumphal offering to the demons, had we been obliged to receive thee on thy return from Persia, and perhaps thou didst hope, in thy perverse thoughts, to drag us, together with thee, to Hades. . . .

"I dedicate to thee"—thus Gregory closes his tremendous invective—"this column, more lofty and splendid than the Columns of Hercules. The latter remained fixed in one spot, visible only to those who visit them. This one, being movable, may be seen by every one and from everywhere. It will be, believe me, transmitted even to posterity, branding thee and thy enterprise, and will be a warning to others, never to attempt so great a rebellion against God, because the same crime would meet with the same punishment!"[1]

Before such diverse, or rather, contradictory statements regarding Julian's personality presented to us by contemporary writers, for some of whom he is a sort of demi-god endowed with every virtue, while for others he is naught else but a vile and unclean monster, it would be a hopeless task to discover the truth, if we did not possess the writings of Julian himself, from which it is not difficult to form an exact idea of the character and talents of the man. We have already examined a great part of these writings in the course of our study, and we have found in them the necessary

[1] Gregor., *op. cit.*, 132 sq.

indications to appreciate his mode of considering philosophical and religious problems, and to explain his conduct in the complex conditions by which he found himself surrounded. But now we must try to penetrate into the soul of the man, and see him as he really is. For this purpose, we cannot look for assistance from the two tiresome declamations composed by Julian in honour of Constantius, when he had re-entered into the good graces of his cousin. These are two compositions written under the pressure of political prudence, by no means the echo of his convictions, and, therefore, only readable as the proof of the decadence into which Greek letters had fallen in the schools of the rhetoricians, where the art of writing was reduced to the application of determined formulas, and to an exercise of artificial imitations of examples taken from ancient history and literature.

But we must admit, for the sake of truth, that these discourses reflect anything but honour upon Julian. It is easy to understand the reasons of opportunism that may have suggested to the new Cæsar the idea of composing these eulogies. Raised suddenly to the pinnacle of power, invested with an authority that rendered him almost a colleague of the Emperor, sustained, as he knew he was, by the vigilant and powerful influence of Eusebia, he could easily imagine that a new era had opened for him. Because of all this, he did

not wish to compromise either his present or his future, and was obliged to curry favour with the suspicious and vain-glorious Constantius, by dedicating to him the first-fruits of his intellect and his studies. But, admitting all this, and attributing a great part to the emphatic and scholastic formulary of the rhetorical school to which he belonged, we find in these eulogies such an excessive adulation that it produces a painful effect, above all when we recall that which Julian himself related a few years later to the Athenians, *i.e.*, that he was immediately impressed by the duplicity of Constantius, even when he assigned to him the name and the power of Cæsar, because he found himself surrounded by spies, looked upon with suspicion by his generals, and considered by them almost in the light of a prisoner.[1]

We must needs attribute to Julian an extraordinary power of dissimulation, if he was able, notwithstanding the most precarious circumstances by which he was surrounded, to send these hymns of admiration and gratitude to his wicked cousin, the murderer of all his family! It is with a positive feeling of relief that, on arriving at the end of these declamations, we hear the author excusing himself from giving proofs of the virtues with which he has decorated the personality of Constantius, on the plea that this would take too long, and that he has no time to devote to the Muses, as the

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 277 sq.

necessities of the moment call him to action,[1] and this action was possibly the great campaign against the German coalition headed by Conodomarius—the campaign that was closed by the glorious battle of Strasburg.

The Essay of Professor R. D'Alfonso, on the writings of Julian, with which we only became acquainted after publishing the first edition of this book, is, for the trustworthiness of its information and the impartiality of its judgment, an excellent contribution to the studies concerning Julian. Professor D'Alfonso sustains a thesis that to us appears rather bold, namely, that Julian's panegyrics on Constantius were written with an ironical intention, so that, instead of being the expressions of a deplorable opportunism, they were effectively bitter, but veiled, attacks against his new but ever perfidious protector. Now, there can be no doubt that Julian, in his most secret thoughts, did not take seriously the fulsome flattery he lavished upon his cousin. But this is not sufficient to give his discourse the characteristics of irony. For this it would be necessary, if he had some reason to reveal his true thoughts, for him to have written in such a manner that his hearers and readers might be able to guess them, although hidden by words conveying a contrary meaning. Now, these panegyrics were written during the *lune de miel*

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 130. *ἐμοὶ οὐ σχολὴ τὰς μούσας ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον θεραπεύειν, αλλ' ὥρα λοιπὸν πρὸς ἔργον τρέπεσθαι.*

of Julian's reconciliation with Constantius; the first, probably, during his sojourn in Milan, the second in Gaul, on the eve of one of his first campaigns. Julian had accepted this new position, that made him the second person in the Empire. This being the case, it was only reasonable for him to desire to strengthen his claims and to gain as much as possible the favour of the Emperor, or at least to dissipate those suspicions which yet lingered in his soul. What folly it would have been if, in the very moment in which he received from Constantius the office of Cæsar and held it in his name, he should have offended him by the thrusts of a too transparent irony! The two panegyrics were written with the aim of eradicating the distrust that the consciousness of his own perverse actions aroused in Constantius, and are thus in part justifiable. The most delicate point in the renewed relationship between the two cousins must have been the memory of the murders of the father and relatives of Julian, perpetrated by Constantius at the time of Constantine's death. Notwithstanding this, in his first discourse, Julian clearly takes his position, and repeats, in his own name, those excuses with which Constantius attempted to extenuate his crimes. Julian speaks of the wise provisions made by Constantius when he assumed the Empire, and then adds this phrase: "But however, forced by circumstances, against thy will, thou didst not prevent others from committing

excesses."[1] As we have shown in our demonstration, this excuse does not in the slightest exculpate Constantius, but, at any rate, it gave him the loophole by which he might escape all blame, that of throwing the responsibility on the shoulders of others. This explanation was officially admitted, and at the court of Constantius was accepted with closed eyes, as if it were an article of faith. Julian, as he says in his manifesto to the Athenians, did not put the slightest faith in it. But this does not change the fact that his declaration, at the moment in which he made it, must have been considered as a proof and a guarantee that he had forgotten the past, that he had resigned all thoughts of vengeance, and all sentiments of horror and anger. Having taken this step, which must have been for Julian the most painful and repugnant, it was easy work, with the hypocritical recognition of the virtues of Constantius, to enter on the *mare magnum* of the rhetorical adulation of his epoch, and to fill up the ordinary lines of official panegyrics with that stuff (excepting, perhaps, some points in the second panegyric) which was to be found "ready-made" in the rhetorical stores of the school.

But if he was not sincere, he at least wished to appear so, and, in our manner of seeing, the idea of an ironical intention in his discourses ought

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 19. *πλήν εἴ που βιασθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν καιρῶν ἄκων ἑτέρους ἐξαμαρτάνειν οὐ διεκώλυσας.*

to be excluded. Until after the battle of Strasburg, Julian believed he would be able to live on good terms with Constantius. And on his side he tried, by word and deed, to persuade his cousin to have faith in him and in his work. Certainly, in his later writings, Julian wishes to make us believe, that, from the very first day when he was passing triumphantly through the streets of Milan in the Imperial coach, he had a presentiment of the truth, and the certainty of being betrayed by Constantius. But we must not blindly accept all that the able disputant says in his own defence. And, on the other hand, we must allow a great deal for the effects of historical "perspective," that diminishes distances and gives a fore-shortened view to events which, in reality, happened at long intervals. We, therefore, believe that the only conclusion is that these panegyrics were written by Julian with the positive intention of making himself agreeable to Constantius, and that they are a true reflection of a determined moment in the life of our hero.

In the same style, and on the same line of official discourses, is the panegyric on the Empress Eusebia, with part of which we are already familiar. In this, however, we detect an accent of undoubted respect and an expression of real gratitude, and, perhaps, of a secret tenderness for this noble lady, who had brought, as her marriage portion, "a correct education, an harmonic intelligence,

a flower and breath of beauty such as to eclipse that of all other virgins, as the rays of the full moon eclipse and obscure the light of the stars."[1] Concerning this panegyric on Eusebia, we shall speak more fully later on, and we shall attempt to discover the nature of the relationship between the young prince and his beautiful and powerful cousin.

We have already spoken of the philosophical and religious discourses which, being decidedly doctrinal in their intent, are, therefore, useless in our present researches. But, in the other writings that have reached us, Julian's spontaneous originality, already revealed to us in the *Misopogon*, appears in its untrammelled brilliancy. In the *Banquet of the Cæsars*, in the Discourses to Themistius and Sallustius, and, above all, in his Epistles, we recognise the man as he really is, the witty, vivacious, and acute writer, who, by means of a genuine inspiration, succeeds in overcoming the pedantic and scholastic formalities in which he had been reared.

The *Banquet of the Cæsars* is a satire full of wit and wisdom, and does honour to Julian as a writer, a man, and an emperor. In this satire he passes in review all his predecessors, exposing their errors, their failings, and their vices. Among them all, one alone finds grace with him, and this is Marcus Aurelius. Most admirable indeed

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 109.

this young man of thirty, ruler of the world, who chooses as his model the most wise among all the emperors. All his other judgments are in harmony with this preference, and if the severity of these is sometimes excessive, they are always inspired by a high sentiment of morality, and expressed with extreme elegance.

Julian at the feast of the Saturnalia, during which it was a duty to laugh and divert oneself, not being able to do either, proposes to a friend to narrate to him an interesting myth. The friend agrees, and Julian begins. "Romulus," he tells him, "in order to celebrate those same Saturnalia, decided to invite the gods and the emperors to a banquet on Olympus. The gods, having accepted the invitation, are the first to arrive, and occupy magnificent thrones in the prescribed order. Silenus is next to Bacchus, whom he greatly amuses with his jokes and witticisms. After the gods are all seated, the emperors enter one by one, and Silenus greets each of them with a satirical allusion. Julius Cæsar comes first, and Silenus exclaims: 'Beware of this man, O Jupiter, as, on account of his love of power, he might attempt to rob thee of thy sovereignty. Mark how tall and handsome he is. He resembles me, if in naught else, in his baldness!' After him comes Octavius, who changes colour like a chameleon, now yellow, now red, now black, and again grey. Then Tiberius, full of sores and ulcers;

then Caligula, whom the gods refuse to see, and he is chased away and hurled back into Tartarus. Then Silenus, seeing Claudius, exclaims: 'Thou art wrong, O Romulus, to invite this, thy successor, without his freedmen Narcissus and Pallas. Summon them here, together with his wife Messalina, for without them he is only a "super" in the tragedy.' Here comes Nero, with the lyre and crowned with a laurel wreath. And Silenus turning to Apollo: 'This one tries to imitate thee!' And Apollo replies: 'And I will deprive this vile imitator of his wreath!' And Nero, bereft of his wreath, is swallowed by Cocytus." Thus they all pass in succession, each one being accused and scoffed at, excepting Nerva, Marcus Aurelius, — whom Silenus chides for his over-indulgence towards his wife and child, — the second Claudius, and Probus, who has no other fault but his excessive severity. Then arrives the quartette of Diocletian and his three associates —a most excellent and harmonious combination, were it not for the discordant note sounded by Maximianus. Finally, to this harmony succeeds a strident discord, and behold Constantine with his rivals. Constantine alone remains, Licinius and Magnentius being chased away by the gods.

The banquet being thus arranged, Mercury proposes to open a competition to decide which of the emperors is worthy of winning a prize

awarded by the gods. This proposal is well received, especially as Romulus has, for a long time, desired to be permitted to have some one of his successors near him. But Hercules insists that Alexander should also be called, and this is granted him. The gods decide that only the most noted among the emperors should be permitted to compete, and they choose Alexander, Cæsar, Octavius, Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, and, finally, on the recommendation of Bacchus, also Constantine, who is, however, only allowed to stand on the threshold of the hall of the gods. Each one of the six rivals is called on to make a speech, in order to glorify his own undertakings. These speeches are written by our poet with a subtle acuteness. Julius Cæsar and Alexander vie with each other as to which is due the greatest glory. Cæsar endeavours to prove that his enterprises were much more difficult and heroic than those of Alexander, while the latter tries to refute the arguments of the former, by calling particular attention to the fact that Cæsar's triumphs were mainly due to the inexpertness and lack of talent of his adversary, Pompey. This last-named was certainly not one of Julian's favourites. Octavius pleads his wise administration of the Empire, the ending of the civil war, the giving to the Roman Empire well-defined boundaries, the Danube and the Euphrates, and healing the wounds that continual wars had inflicted on the State. It seems

to Octavius that he has governed better than the two warlike emperors. Trajan reminds them that, besides his military enterprises, he can boast of the kindness with which he treated the citizens, and the mildness of his government, so that, by his words, he gains the sympathy of the gods. After him comes Marcus Aurelius, and at once Silenus whispers to Bacchus: "'Let us listen to this Stoic! Who knows how many paradoxes and marvellous maxims he will reveal to us!' But Marcus Aurelius, looking at Jupiter and the other gods, says: 'It is not for me, O Jupiter, O gods, to make discourses and take part in competitions. If you were ignorant of my actions, it would be advisable that I should acquaint you with them. But as from the gods nothing is hidden, you will, of course, give me the prize which I deserve.' And Marcus Aurelius appeared to the gods as one marvellously wise, for he knew when it was useful to speak, and also when it was commendable to remain silent."[1] Finally, Constantine, who had remained on the threshold of the hall, is unwilling to speak, well knowing how inferior are his actions to those of the others. But feeling obliged to say something, he awkwardly attempts to prove that he is superior to the others because of the character of the enemies with whom he had fought, for, instead of waging war against honest citizens, as Cæsar and Octavius had done, he had

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 421, 19.

overcome perverse tyrants. "'Marcus Aurelius,' he foolishly adds, 'has demonstrated by his silence that he is inferior to us all. And Silenus rejoins: 'O Constantine, thou dost present to us as thy work the garden of Adonis.' 'And what dost thou mean by gardens of Adonis?' 'They are those which the women, in honour of the lover of Venus Aphrodite, make up with small flower-pots, in which they have planted sweet herbs. For a short while they are green, and then rapidly fade away.' And Constantine blushes, well understanding the allusion to his work."[1]

It is easy to perceive that Julian entertained a profound antipathy to his uncle, and sought to diminish his fame. This antipathy had its natural origin in the privileged position bestowed by Constantine upon Christianity. But it must seem strange that in this sort of examination to which the emperors are submitted by the gods, no other allusion should be made to that which, in their eyes, must have been Constantine's greatest crime. However, perhaps Julian did not wish to attribute to this event, which for him was nothing more than a passing episode, a greater importance than it seemed to him to deserve; and, besides, he did not wish to diminish the effect of the parting shot which, as we shall see later, he discharges at the apostasy of Constantine.

The speeches having ended, the competition

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 423, 10 sq.

should have been closed, but the gods are not yet thoroughly satisfied, because, in order to determine the merits of each one, it is not sufficient to be acquainted with their acts, in which Fortune may have played a great part; it is necessary also to scrutinise the intentions that have influenced these actions. Hereupon Mercury begins a new interrogatory. "What was the aim," he says, addressing himself to Alexander, "for which thou hast worked and so greatly exerted thyself?" "To conquer all," he replies. And Silenus, with a long and humorous address, induces Alexander to recognise that he had not been able to conquer himself. "And what has been the object of thy life?" demands Mercury of Cæsar. "To be the first, and not only not be, but also not be considered, second to any one." "Certainly," Silenus remarks, "thou wert the most powerful of thy fellow-citizens, but thou didst not succeed in making thyself loved by them, notwithstanding thy pretence of philanthropy and the adulations you showered upon them." Augustus, who says that his aim in life was to govern wisely, and Trajan, who admits having had the same aspirations as Alexander, but in greater moderation, are both subjected to the taunts of Silenus. Marcus Aurelius alone, by the simplicity of his answers, vanquishes the sarcasms of that satirical god. "What seems to thee," Mercury asks Marcus Aurelius, "the noblest aim in life?" "To

imitate the gods," he replies. "But what dost thou mean," Silenus inquires, "by imitating the gods?" And Marcus Aurelius—"To have as few wants as possible, and to do all the good that is in thy power to do." And then Silenus adds: "And thou, therefore, didst not need anything?" And Marcus—"I myself had need of nothing, and of very little my poor miserable body." Silenus, having exhausted all his resources, seeks to embarrass this wise emperor by accusing him of too much indulgence towards his wife and son. But Marcus Aurelius defends his actions by quoting Homer, and invoking the examples of indulgence given by Jupiter, who taught that we should be tolerant with wives, and who once said to Mars, "I would strike thee with my thunderbolts if thou wert not my son." Then comes the turn of Constantine, who is absolutely annihilated by the jeers of Silenus; and the gods finish by voting in a majority for Marcus Aurelius. Then Mercury, commissioned by Jupiter, announces to the rivals that, through divine bounty, all of them, the victor and the vanquished, are allowed to choose each a tutelar god, near whom they can live in safety. Alexander, as soon as he hears this, places himself near Hercules; Octavius, near Apollo; Marcus Aurelius, between Jupiter and Saturn; Cæsar is received by Mars and Venus; Trajan places himself near Alexander. And now we come to the strange *finale*, which it is necessary to reproduce

in Julian's own words. "Constantine, not finding among the gods an archetype to his taste, and perceiving Incontinence in his neighbourhood, runs to meet her. She received him most kindly, embraced him, arrayed him in a glittering peplum, and led him to Dissoluteness, near whom was Jesus, who cried: 'Corrupters, murderers, execrable and criminal men, come unto me without fear! By washing yourselves with these few drops of water, I will render ye clean in an instant, and if ye should sin again, I will again give ye means to cleanse yourselves anew, if only ye will strike your heads and your breasts.' Constantine felt most happy to be with him, and together with his sons left the assembly of the gods. But the demons, avengers of this impiety, tormented him and those belonging to him, and made them pay dearly for the blood of their relations which they had shed."

At the close of the scene, Julian presents himself as the last of the emperors, and Mercury says to him: "I permit thee to become acquainted with Father Mithras. Submit thyself to his commands, and thou wilt find a wise instruction and a safe path for thy life, and the good hope of having as a guide a merciful deity when the moment comes for thee to depart."[1]

This is indeed a most shameful mockery and a supremely iniquitous interpretation of the inspiration

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 431, 8 sq.

of Jesus. But here we must observe that the name "Jesus" does not refer to the personality of the Evangelical Christ, but to a personification of the Christian religion as it was in Julian's time, and as it appeared to him. Now, the truth is, as we have previously pointed out, that Christianity had, in no respect, moralised the customs of mankind. In Julian's text this appears evident from the fact that it was possible for the writer to accuse Jesus of having been the demoraliser of the world. Christianity had taken root because it had been able to satisfy certain aspirations of the human mind at the moment in which it appeared. But Christianity could not make man moral, because man cannot be moralised by means of a doctrine imparted from without; he is, on the contrary, only made better by the conditions of the medium in which he lives, and this medium is the direct cause of that wholly relative conception, morality. Whether pagans or Christians, men were equally endowed with a certain amount of good and evil qualities, harmonising with the character of existing customs: morals do not create customs, but, on the contrary, morals are the outcome of prevailing customs. In the early days of Christianity, when it was most dangerous to become a Christian, only those professed it who were susceptible of exalted convictions, and were capable of heroically sacrificing themselves, so that all appear to us as saints. But when Christianity was recognised as a religion, at

first tolerated and, later on, dominant, it became, like all other religions, a mere cloak, that leaves unchanged the man whom it envelops. Among Christians, no less than among pagans, there were good and bad, selfish and generous, cruel and merciful. Ambrose might have been a better man than Simmachus and Libanius, who remained pagans; but Julian, as a pagan, was as much to be admired for his morals as Constantine and Constantius, converts to Christianity, were to be despised. Now, Constantine's Court, although Christian, was a hotbed in which every rotten abomination fermented. Julian recognised, in his uncle and his cousin, the assassins of his family, and, at the same time, saw them exalted by the Christians and freed from all stain, by the simple effects of a purely formal conversion. From this arose his feeling of abhorrence, and, considering the special conditions in which he lived, one must acknowledge that it was most explicable. Julian's error—an error truly common to most men—was to imagine that some one was responsible for the inevitable, and thus, with sacrilegious levity, he attributed to the Founder of Christianity the responsibility of that which was the consequence of human nature, in a determined moment of its evolution.[1]

[1] We have said above (*vide* vol. i. p. 145) that the report was current among the pagans, and was repeated by Zosimus, that Constantine had inclined to Christianity because he believed that this religion had the power of washing away the sins committed by a man. And

This Dialogue of Julian, like all his other works, only lacks the *arduus limæ labor* to be most excellent. He gives us his ideas concerning the duties of a sovereign. And so lofty are these ideas, that he has naught but disapproval for the emperors who preceded him, with the one exception of Marcus Aurelius. It appears that even the glory gained in war found little grace in his eyes, and did not constitute a merit for those who had attained it. Julian, therefore, should have been a most peace-loving emperor, entirely devoted to that religious propaganda which was his most lively preoccupation. But, once again, nature vanquished reason, and he proved that, notwithstanding his beautiful theories, he resembled, in many respects, that Alexander whom he did not spare with his taunts through the medium of the sarcastic Silenus. This crowned Neo-Platonic philosopher was, in reality, above all a warrior, and the attractions of glory possessed for him an irresistible fascination, although he was unwilling to confess it. So we see that, as soon as he reached the throne, his first

Constantine, more than any other man, had the need of being cleansed. We also added that this report could only have had a legendary origin. Constantine perpetrated his most atrocious domestic crimes, *i.e.*, the murders of his wife Fausta, of his son Crispus, of his infant grandchild Licinianus, many years after the promulgation of the Edict of Milan, and, on the other hand, so little did he crave the purifying waters, that he only asked for baptism on his death-bed. It is impossible, however, not to recognise in Julian's words an allusion to this report, and we must therefore conclude that, among the pagans who were his contemporaries, this was the current explanation of Constantine's conversion.

thought was to throw himself into that insane Persian war, which was only undertaken to satisfy his adventurous spirit and to astonish the world by such a colossal enterprise. Libanius especially alludes to his great anxiety and impatience, and in his Necrological Discourse describes the ardour with which Julian rushed into this hazardous attempt. He with difficulty acquiesced in the short delay indispensable to drill men and horses, all the while shaking with suppressed fear lest some one should mockingly say of him that he was of the same family as the cowardly Constantius. The King of Persia sent him a letter proposing that they should submit the differences between Persia and the Empire to a Court of Arbitration. Every one implored him to accept this proposition. But he, throwing the letter angrily aside, declared it would be dishonourable to condescend to a discussion with the destroyers of so many cities, and he replied to the king that ambassadors were unnecessary, as, in a short time, he himself was coming to visit him. Such a response would probably have been natural to many of those emperors from whom Julian withheld his approval, but it would never have issued from the lips of wise Marcus Aurelius, who, in making war, was only guided by conscientious motives, as in all other acts pertaining to his office, and who fought sadly and passionlessly, much preferring to have passed his time immersed in his melancholy meditations! But

in Julian, philosophy and even pedantry are strangely blended with youthful ardour and a strong longing for action, and this makes him a highly original figure, exceedingly rich in striking contrasts, and one of the most interesting in all history.

The long study we have already made of the work and writings of Julian has given us a clear insight into the nature of his personality—a personality so fascinating and paradoxical that it cast a brilliant ray of light, as that of a passing meteor, upon the growing darkness in which ancient civilisation was about to be engulfed. But we do not wish to leave him until we have sought in his Epistles some more precise indications of his merits and foibles. Julian's letters are among the most interesting documents in Greek literature. Unfortunately, even the small number that remain are in a bad state of preservation, doubtful as to the text, and often disfigured with interpolations and omissions, so that for these, as well as for the rest of his writings, it is greatly to be desired that the light of modern criticism should be directed towards them, in order that an edition might be published, illustrating them in all their bearings, philological, literary, and, above all, historical. Some of these letters are merely rhetorical exercises, others are edicts and manifestoes to cities and magistrates, and with these we are already acquainted. Many are short, witty, and emotional expressions of the im-

pressions of the moment, and it is in these that we find most genuinely portrayed the soul of him who composed them.

But before reading some of Julian's letters, we must glance at two of his other works, which are most interesting, and possess the characteristics of his treatises and letters. These are the Epistle to Themistius and the Exhortation to Sallustius.

Themistius was one of the most celebrated men of his times. A famous writer and rhetorician, he had a school at Constantinople, and enjoyed the protection of all the emperors from Constantine to Theodosius, having even held the high office of Prefect of Constantinople. Although he was not a member of the Neo-Platonic *clique*, he was a most fervent Hellenist. But being of a lofty and generous spirit, he recommended, above all, liberty of thought and religious tolerance. The discourse delivered by him, a pagan, before the Emperor Valens, in order to persuade him to desist from his persecution of the Orthodox Christians, has remained famous.[1] In this discourse, Themistius considers things from the point of view of rational theism, which for a moment inspired Constantine in his Edict of Milan, and remains wholly indifferent to the forms of worship. Themistius must have exercised a very salutary influence on the soul of Julian.

[1] Socrat., *op. cit.*, 205.—Sozom., *op. cit.*, 565.

The Epistle to Themistius is a genuine indication of the character of the young Emperor and of the tendencies of his mind. It seems that no sooner had Julian ascended the throne than he wrote and confided to him his anxieties, the difficulties that beset him, and, at the same time, his regrets at being obliged to renounce for ever his peaceful life and studies. Themistius must have replied to him rather harshly, reminding him of the magnitude of his new duties, and upbraiding him almost as if he were guilty of longing for idleness and peace. Julian did not willingly accept the reproof of his philosophic friend, and addressed to him the following Epistle, as subtle as it is dignified, one of his best efforts, and a living testimony to his honesty and good sense. There is nothing more characteristic than this familiar and friendly discussion between master and disciple, in which the latter gives the reasons for his anxieties and doubts, and reveals the aspirations nurtured in his heart—aspirations that fate did not permit him to realise. Certainly the man who could feel and write in such a manner was not the infernal monster that Gregory attempted to depict in his "Colonna Infame."[1]

"I pray with all earnestness"—thus begins Julian—"that I may be able to confirm the hopes of which thou hast written me, but I fear that I may fail to substantiate those exaggerated expectations

[1] The author here and elsewhere alludes to the well-known book of A. Manzoni, *La Colonna Infame*.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

concerning me that thou hast aroused in others, and yet more in thyself. Having convinced myself, a long time ago, that it was my duty to emulate Alexander and Marcus Aurelius, not to mention others, celebrated for their virtues, I am overcome by a great fear and agitation lest I should appear entirely to lack the courage of the former, and be incapable of emulating, in the slightest degree, the perfect virtue of the latter. Thinking of all this, I felt myself inclined to praise a life without cares, and it was delightful to me to recall our conversations at Athens, and I only desired to sing to you, O my friend, similar to those who, carrying great weights, sing to lessen their suffering. But thou, by thy recent letter, hast greatly augmented my fears, and rendered the struggle more arduous, by telling me that God has entrusted me with the same mission as that through which Hercules and Dionysus, at the same time sages and kings, cleansed the land and the sea of the foulness by which they were defiled. Thou wilt that I should divest myself of all ideas of quiet and repose, and should endeavour to act in a manner worthy of these expectations. And then thou callest to mind the lawgivers, Solon, Pittacus, Lycurgus, and thou dost add that I am expected to be, even more than these, impeccable in my justice. Reading these words, I am astounded, since I well know that thou wouldst never stoop either to flattery or deceit, and, as to myself, I am well aware that nature has

not endowed me with any special quality, except one, the love of philosophy. And here I will not mention the adverse circumstances that, until now, have rendered fruitless this my one devotion. I, therefore, did not know what to think of thy words, when God suggested to me that thou, perhaps, hadst desired to encourage me with praise, and by exposing to me the extent of the difficulties with which the life of the statesman is surrounded. But this discourse, far from encouraging me in this manner of life, rather dissuades me from adopting it. If one accustomed to navigate the Bosphorus, and even that with difficulty and not willingly, should hear predicted by some expert in the art of divination, that he is destined soon to cross the Ægean and Ionian Seas, and venture afar on the high ocean, and the soothsayer should add: 'Now thou dost not lose sight of the walls and the harbours, but there thou shalt see neither light-house nor rock, and consider thyself fortunate if thou canst sight a distant ship, and be able to speak with the navigators, and again and again thou shalt pray God to let thee touch land, to permit thee to enter the harbour before thy life is ended, so that thou mayst give over the ship intact, restore the sailors safe and sound to their families, and give thy body to thy native earth, and even admitting that all this will happen, thou wilt not be sure of it until the last day,'—dost thou believe that he who would hear this discourse would choose for his

abode a city near the sea, or would he not rather bid adieu to wealth and the advantages of commerce, consider as naught the acquaintance of illustrious men, of foreign friends, of nations and cities, and adopt, as most wise, the saying of Epicurus, who teaches us to live in obscurity? And it looks as if, well knowing all this, thou hast wished to warn me by including me likewise in the reproofs that thou hast addressed to Epicurus, and by combating, in him, my own convictions."[1] And Julian goes on to affirm that he does not deserve these indirect reproofs, because no one abhors a lazy existence more than he does. And it is only natural that he should experience the greatest hesitation in assuming an office that requires so many special gifts, one in which, after all, luck has a greater influence than virtue. And Fortune presents a double danger, because when it is adverse it brings us low, and when favourable, it corrupts us. And it is even more difficult to issue unscathed from the second danger than from the first. Julian demonstrates that prosperity caused the ruin of Alexander, the Persians, the Macedonians, the Athenians, the Syracusians, the magistrates of Sparta, the generals of Rome, and thousands of emperors and kings. Here Julian invokes the testimony of Plato, who, in his marvellous "Laws," demonstrates the power of fortune in the government of human affairs, and

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 328, 1 sq.

what is for Julian far more serious, teaches, by means of a myth, that a man chosen to rule over nations must strive to emulate the virtues of a god. After quoting the text of Plato, Julian exclaims: "This text that I have here integrally reproduced, what does it mean? It tells us that a king, even though by nature he be a man, should become, by force of will, a divine being, a dæmon, casting aside everything that is coarse and mortal in his soul, except that which is necessary for the preservation of his body. Now if a man, considering this, trembles to see himself dragged into such a life, does it appear to thee that it may be said of him that he only desires the idleness of Epicurus, and the gardens and suburbs of Athens, and the myrtle groves and tiny house of Socrates?"[1] With an accent of just resentment against his teacher, Julian exclaims: "Never have I given evidence of preferring ease to hard work!"—and he goes on to remind him of his youth full of dangers, and the letters he had sent to Themistius when at Milan, before leaving for Greece, when, on account of the suspicions of Constantius, he was exposed to most deadly perils,—letters "that were neither filled with complaints, nor gave evidence of littleness of soul, nor cowardice, nor lack of dignity." But it is not the authority of Plato alone that renders the young Emperor timorous and hesitating. Aristotle also agrees with Plato in explaining the great and in-

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 335, 12 sq.

superable difficulties to be found in the government of nations, which he also considers a task beyond the strength of man.[1] After having quoted and commented on the text of Aristotle, Julian continues: "Because of this great fear, I often permit myself to regret my previous existence. The fault of this rests with thee, not because thou hast proposed to me illustrious men as models, Solon, Lycurgus, Pittacus, but because thou hast advised me to carry forth my philosophy outside of my domestic walls, and demonstrate it *sub cælo*. That would be exactly as if thou didst say to some one in infirm health, who with great difficulty was able to take very little exercise inside his own house: 'Now thou art arrived at Olympia, and thou must pass from thy domestic gymnasium to the stadium of Jupiter, where thou shalt have as spectators the Greeks here gathered together from all parts, and above all, thy fellow-citizens, of whom thou art chosen as the champion, and some barbarians whom thou must fill with awe, so that thy country may appear most terrible to them.' Certainly such words would deprive him of all courage, and cause him to tremble even before the ordeal. Well, by thy words thou hast put me in the same condition. And if I have judged rightly concerning all this, and if in some respects I fall short of my duty, or am a complete failure, thou wilt very soon let me know."[2]

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 337, 11 sq.

[2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, 340, 20 sq.

After having thus replied with dignified modesty to the reproofs of Themistius, who accused him of lukewarmness, Julian does not close his letter without refuting one of the statements by which the master sought to recall the disciple to a sense of his duty, and still more to awake his enthusiasm for the work he had initiated. Themistius, it appears, had written to him that a life of action is more desirable and more worthy of praise than a life of contemplation, and that he should, therefore, be happy to find himself in a position that required continual action. Julian answers in a tone in which we recognise the note of a lost ideal: "Oh, my beloved master, worthy of all my veneration, I must speak to thee of another subject in thy letter that has rendered me uncertain and perturbed. Thou sayest that an active life is more worthy of praise than the life of the philosopher, quoting Aristotle as thy authority."[1] Then Julian maintains that the text of Aristotle does not express at all the idea that Themistius wishes to convey, since Aristotle speaks, it is true, of legislators and political philosophers generally, and of those who are exclusively addicted to mental work, but not in the least of practical men, and still less of kings. Yes, says Julian, thinkers are the most happy and useful of men, and their glory is much greater than that of conquerors. "I say that the son of

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 240, 21 sq.

Sophroniscus has accomplished things much greater than Alexander. . . . Who was saved by the victories of Alexander? What city was more wisely governed because of him? What man became better? Thou wouldst find many who through him were made more rich, none who became more wise and prudent; on the contrary, they grew more vain-glorious and haughty. But all those who are now saved through the power of philosophy, can be said to be saved by Socrates."[1] The philosopher, Julian concludes by invoking with filial reverence, as an example, the life of Themistius, by confirming his teachings by means of his actions, and by demonstrating in this manner how he would wish others to act, is a much more powerful and efficient counsellor of noble acts, than he who prescribes them by decrees and laws.

To appreciate all the peculiarity and interest of these considerations, and these aspirations towards the tranquil and serene life of the philosopher, we must remember that they were expressed by a man who had just undertaken the most hazardous enterprise, a man who had come from the extremities of distant Gaul, with a handful of men, as far as the Balkans, in order to wrest the Imperial crown from his cousin Constantius. How could such a man, on the morrow after having attained his ends, abandon himself to

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 342, 7 sq.

discouragement, and express a desire for studious solitude? Certainly, neither Julius Cæsar after passing the Rubicon, nor Bonaparte after the "18 Brumaire," would have expressed themselves as Julian did. It cannot be denied that, in the Epistle to Themistius, as in all the other writings of Julian, there is a part which is nothing more than a scholastic exercise. But, notwithstanding, any one reading this letter must feel that the thesis Julian sustains is not wholly artificial, and that it is the true expression of the condition of his mind. Julian was essentially endowed with a contemplative soul. He was not ambitious; it was not lust for power that plunged him into his perilous enterprise. If there had not been a motive that strongly impelled him in this direction, Julian would probably never have left Gaul, and would not have accepted the Imperial purple from his soldiers. His conduct in Antioch was not that of a man wild for applause, or of one who wished to curry popular favour, and to extend and consolidate his position, but rather that of a man possessed by one single idea. This idea, which he considered it was his duty to realise, caused him to assume a part not at all consonant with the aspirations of his soul, in which the ideal of true happiness was a life absorbed in study and the fantastic hallucinations of his mystical dreams. The secret of it all was that he believed himself to be the necessary instrument of a predestined

enterprise, that of the restoration of Hellenism, which to him meant the restoration of wisdom and virtue. We have seen in the allegory of "The Discourse against Heraclius" that this enterprise was for him the expression of a divine order, and that he attributed to the will of the gods his safety and his designation to the Imperial throne. And he, most certainly, believed this. Julian was wrapt up in this idea, and willingly dedicated all his strength and intelligence to its ends. A group of illustrious men—Sallustius, Maximus, Iamblichus, Themistius, Libanius—discerned in him the only hope of salvation from the ever-growing tide of Christianity and barbarism that was threatening to sweep away everything, and they stimulated him and spurred him on, fearing that he might not prove himself sufficiently enthusiastic in his action, and did not hesitate to accuse of faint-heartedness the hero of Strassburg, this indefatigable general and wise administrator. And it is not without a slight feeling of bitterness towards his friends, and at the same time of modest and high-minded dignity, that Julian thus closes his Epistle to Themistius: "The gist of my letter, which has already grown longer than I intended it to have been, is that—it is not because I fear fatigue, and desire pleasure and idleness, or love ease, that I complain of political life. But, as I said from the beginning, I have neither the education necessary for it, nor the natural aptitude,

and, moreover, I fear to do harm to philosophy, which although I dearly love, I have not acquired, and, furthermore, in these days, is not honoured by our contemporaries. I have already written to you about this, and I now repel your accusations with all my strength. May God grant me good fortune and a wisdom equal to it! But I feel the need of being helped first of all by the Omnipotent, and also by you, O students of philosophy, now that I am called to guide you, for whose sakes I run these many risks. If God through me means to bestow some benefits on mankind greater than those to be expected from my education and the opinion I have of myself, ye must not become irritated on account of my words. I am conscious that I do not possess any other good quality except that, not being a great man, I am aware of the fact, and, therefore, I beg and entreat you not to ask great things from me, but to leave all in the hands of God. Thus I shall not be responsible for failures, and, in my good moments, I shall be wise and temperate, not attributing to my merit the work of others. Attributing, as is just, all the success to God, I shall acknowledge my gratitude to him, and I advise you to acknowledge yours."

The Epistle to Themistius is a document highly creditable to Julian, and an eloquent proof of the serene tranquillity of the mind and judgment of the young Emperor. Not less

interesting or less adapted to reveal the nobility of Julian's character is the Exhortation, directed to Sallustius, in which he expresses to him his great grief at seeing him depart, and endeavours to find some reasons for courage and comfort. Sallustius was the most renowned and the most wise among those men with whom Constantius surrounded the young Cæsar, when he sent him as his representative to Gaul, and was the only one in whom Julian had entire confidence, because he felt that he was the only one who was truly his friend. But when Constantius heard of the rapid and signal successes obtained by Julian, the perfidious Emperor decided to recall Sallustius, because, as Julian himself says in his manifesto to the Athenians, he suspected his cousin on account of his very virtues.[1] And the historian Zosimus aggravates this accusation, affirming that Constantius was prompted by his envy of the military laurels gained by his cousin, due to his having followed the teachings of this wise counsellor.[2] Whatever the cause may have been, the fact is that Julian felt the separation bitterly, and the intercourse with his distant friend was never interrupted, and when he was on the point of leaving Gaul to hasten to the attack of Constantius, he summoned him, and confided to him the government and defence of that great

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 281. *διὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν εὐθέως αὐτῷ γέγονεν ὕποπτος.*
[2] Zosim., *op. cit.*, 206, 6.

province. The wisdom and perspicuity of Sallustius' judgment appear most wonderful when we consider the fact that he alone comprehended the folly and the danger of the Persian expedition, and that he wrote to the Emperor, who was preparing for this unfortunate undertaking, imploring him to desist, and not to rush to his ruin.[1]

In the letter in which Julian takes leave of his friend, who, in obedience to the orders of Constantius, is about to leave him, there is, as in his other writings, a large dose of that rhetorical scholasticism which is the tiresome but indispensable element of all the literature of the Hellenic decadence. But, at the same time, there is the expression of a deep and sincere affection, and a refinement of sentiment and culture that demonstrates to us how the Hellenistic *consorteria*[2] — to use an ugly modern word — surrounding Julian represented the select few in the society of the fourth century, already half barbarised, and we can find, in this very condition of aristocratic intellectualism, its *raison d'être*.

Julian begins his letter with words of the greatest affection, and expresses the idea that misfortunes, when supported with courage, find

[1] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, i. 316.

[2] "Consorteria," in Italian politics, is the union of a few men, mostly of ultra-conservative views, aiming at retaining power. — TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

their remedy in themselves, because they strengthen the character of man. "The sages say that to those who are possessed of intellect, the most terrible misfortunes bring more good than evil in their train. Thus the bee from the most bitter herbs that grow on Mount Hymettus distils sweet juices, from which it makes its honey. And we see that in persons naturally robust and healthy, accustomed to eat anything and everything, the most indigestible food is not only innocuous, but is sometimes even strengthening, while in those who are delicate by nature and from habit, and sickly during the whole of their lives, even the simplest food produces the most serious disorders. Now, those who have given thought to the development of their characters and have not permitted them to become entirely corrupt, but have remained even moderately healthy, though they may not be able to rival the strength of Antisthenes and Socrates, the courage of Callisthenes, or the impassibility of Polemon, will know how to choose a middle path, and find comfort even in the most adverse circumstances."[1]

To this point the rhetorician has spoken. Now the friend appears, and, in accents of the most sincere emotion, exclaims: "But if I examine myself to ascertain how I support and will support thine absence, I feel that I am as

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 212, 7 sq.

deeply grieved as I was the first time I was obliged to part with my teacher. For in a second, behold, everything comes back to my memory, the dangers we have incurred together, our simple and guileless intimacy, our frank and wise conversations, our partnership in all noble enterprises, our equal and inflexible detestation of the wicked, and, through all, we lived near each other, with the same inclination of mind, friends united in habits and desires. And in connection with this, I recall the line of Homer: 'Forsaken was Ulysses.' . . . Since I am now in the same condition as he was, now that God has taken thee away, as he once did Hector, from the shower of darts that calumniators have hurled against thee, or rather, against me; for they wished to wound me through thee, well knowing that I was only vulnerable if they succeeded in depriving me of the companionship of a faithful friend, a valorous comrade-at-arms, and a sure colleague in times of peril. But I am sure that thou dost suffer no less than I do, just because, not being able at present to participate in my fatigues and perils, thou art much more anxious about my safety. With me, interest in thy affairs is not less than interest in my own, and I am aware that thou comfortest thyself in the same manner with me. And, therefore, I am much grieved, because to thee, who, under all circumstances, couldst say, 'I have no thoughts,

all is going well,' I alone am the cause of grief and inquietude."[1]

Julian then quotes one of Plato's sayings, and insists upon the difficulties in which he will find himself, forced, as he is, to govern without any friends around him. Then he continues: "But it is not alone for the help that we mutually gave each other in matters pertaining to government, and which rendered it easy for us to resist the machinations of fate and our adversaries, but also for the threatened lack of all consolation and pleasure, that I feel my heart is breaking. To what other kindly disposed friend can I now turn? With whom can I have the same sincere and guileless intimacy? Who will advise us with wisdom, reprove us with kindliness, who will spur us on to the beautiful and the good, without showing arrogance or presumption, and who will exhort us, freeing the words of their sting as do those who prepare medicines, by extracting all that is disagreeable in them, and leaving only that which is beneficial? All this I reaped from thy friendship, and deprived as I am of these many benefits, what reasoning will be able to persuade me, now that I am nearly dying from the anguish of losing thee and thy wisdom, that I must not tremble, and that I must withstand intrepidly the ordeal which God has imposed upon me?"[2]

Julian, in order to find some consolation, for

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 313, 1. [2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, 315, 4.

Sallustius and himself, refers to the example of the ancients, and quotes Scipio, Cato, Pythagoras, Plato, Democritus, all of whom supported with resignation the absence of their friends. Then he narrates the experience of Pericles, who although obliged to forego the companionship of Anaxagoras when he departed on his expedition to Samos, still continued to act in accordance with his advice. And Julian, wishing to make his case parallel, attributes to Pericles a discourse replete with argument, which is naught else than an artifice of rhetoric. Having finished this scholastic speech, he continues thus :—

"Such were the high ideals with which Pericles —a magnanimous man, who was born free in a free city—admonished his soul. I, born of the men of to-day, comfort and guide myself with arguments more human. And I seek to lessen the depth of my grief by forcing myself to find some comfort for each of those sad and painful images that appear unto me out of the reality of things."[1]

And with subtle delicacy he continues: "The first thought that presented itself to my mind is that henceforward I shall be left alone, deprived of an ideal company, and of free intercourse, since there is no one with whom I can converse with full confidence. But is it not perhaps very easy for me to converse with myself? Or, is there not some one perhaps who may deprive me of thought,

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 322, 5.

and compel me to think and admire against my own will? This would be as wonderful as to write on water, to cook a stone, or to find out the imprints left by the wing of a flying bird. Therefore, so long as no one can deprive us of this, let us find ourselves always together within ourselves, and God will help us. For it is impossible that a man who trusts in the Omnipotent should be wholly abandoned and neglected. On the contrary, God takes possession of him, imparts to him courage, inspires him with strength, suggests to him what he should do, and prevents him from doing that which he ought not to do. Thus the voice of the dæmon followed Socrates, preventing him from doing that which was wrong. And Homer, speaking of Achilles, exclaims—'*He put it in his mind*'—indicating thus the God who watches over our thoughts, when the mind, lost in introspection, makes itself one with God, without anything being able to prevent it. Because the soul needs no ear to learn, nor God a voice to teach; so the communication between the Omnipotent and the spirit is independent of all sensations. . . . If, therefore, we can believe that God is near us, and that we shall be united in spirit, we shall divest our grief of its intensity."

After these beautiful words, dictated by a spiritualism as pure as it is sublime, Julian amuses himself by adorning his letter with flowers of rhetoric culled from his Homeric reminiscences, and then he concludes as follows:—

"A report has reached me that thou wilt not be sent merely to Illyria, but to Thrace, amidst those Greeks who live by the seaside, among whom I was born and bred, and where I learnt to love tenderly the men, the country, and the cities. And, perhaps, in their souls, all love for us is not yet extinguished, and thou wilt be received with great joy, and thou must give them in exchange that of which we have been deprived. But I do not desire this, and prefer that thou shouldst return to us. But, in any case, I do not wish to be found unprepared and without comfort, and it is for this reason that I congratulate them who will see thee, after thou hast left me. If I compare myself with thee, I place myself amidst the Celts, with thee who art amongst the first of the Greeks, famous for equity and for every virtue, a high exponent of rhetoric, not inexpert in philosophy, of which the Greeks alone have penetrated the most secret parts, teaching us to attain truth by means of reason, and not permitting us to apply ourselves to incredible myths and paradoxical prodigies, as is generally the case with most of the barbarians. But whatever this may be, I will not further insist, as I must now take leave of thee with words of good wishes. May a merciful God guide thee wherever thou goest! May the God of hospitality receive thee, and the God of friendship guide thee safely on earth! If thou must navigate, may the billows roll smoothly! Mayst thou appear to all amiable and

honoured; mayst thou bring joy with thy coming and grief with thy departure! May God render the Emperor benevolent to thee, and concede thee everything in reason, and send thee back to us safely and quickly! For this I pray to God for thee, and also for all good and wise men, and I add: Greetings to thee, live happily, and may the gods grant thee every blessing, and to return to thy home in thy beloved fatherland!"[1]

Julian displayed in his affections the enthusiasm of a soul imbued with lofty ideals. Those who fought in his camp, and had assisted him in his hopes, his designs, and illusions, received from him a species of worship.

His enthusiasm, of which we have seen many proofs in the writings we have cited, is manifested in the unlimited, ardent, and hyperbolical admiration that he felt for his teachers—an admiration that often induced him to commit actions which, even to his friends, appeared inconsistent with the dignity of an emperor. Ammianus Marcellinus tells us[2] that one day, when Julian was presiding over the Tribunal of Constantinople, they announced to him that the philosopher Maximus had arrived from Asia. As soon as he heard it, he unceremoniously jumped up, and, forgetting everything, even the case on which he was about

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 326, 8.
[2] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, i. 273, 1 sq.

to pass judgment, rushed from the palace, impatient to welcome the philosopher. Having found him, he embraced and kissed him, and reverently leading him, returned to the Court. Honest Ammianus, who did not participate in the mystical aspirations of his Emperor, considered this excessive admiration, publicly rendered to the philosopher, a proof of ostentation and vain glory. The judgment of Libanius is quite the opposite. He admires, without restriction, Julian's act. Libanius says that Julian had revived the old custom of being present at the sittings of the Tribunal—a custom which Constantius had abandoned, because he was not an orator, while Julian, in his eloquence, rivalled Nestor and Ulysses. The Emperor was all absorbed in the duties of his office, when the arrival of Maximus was announced. Julian suddenly rising in the midst of the judges, runs to the door, moved by the same emotion as Chærephon at the coming of Socrates. But Chærephon was Chærephon, and was in the gymnasium; Julian was master of the world and in the Supreme Court. By his action he demonstrated that wisdom was more worthy of respect than royal prerogatives, as everything that is admirable in royal prerogatives is due to philosophy. Receiving him and embracing him, as is the habit of private persons among themselves, and also of sovereigns, he ushered him into the Court; for, although he did not belong to it, Julian considered that, by so doing, he honoured,

not the man by the place, but the place by the presence of the man. Julian, before the whole Court, narrated that, through the influence of the philosopher, he had been transformed from the man he had been into the man he was; then, taking Maximus by the hand, they went away together. Why did he do this? Not only, as some might suppose, to repay Maximus for the education he had received from him, but also to invite all, both young and old, to educate themselves, because that which is despised by the sovereign is neglected by all, but that which by him is honoured, is followed by all.[1] Ammianus and Libanius in their judgment see things from opposite points of view, and neither the one nor the other is wrong. Ammianus, with the good sense of an honest official, deplored all that might diminish the apparent dignity of the sovereign; Libanius, a fervent Hellenist, admired the homage rendered by the Emperor to the philosophical ideal which inspired this "Renaissance" of polytheism. But Ammianus, who practically was much more clear-sighted than Libanius, deceived himself when he imagined that there was any ostentation in Julian's act.

In the paradoxical personality of Julian, the most contradictory tendencies were united, neither excluding the other, and they manifested themselves, in all sincerity, according to the circumstances and events of the moment. Julian, on the

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, 374, 5 sq.

arrival of his master, forgot that he was an Emperor, and, for the time being, was the fervent and sincere Neo-Platonist. His letters overflow with expressions of ardent admiration for the philosophers who had initiated him into the mysteries of regenerated Hellenism. Among these the most enthusiastic are those directed to Iamblichus.[1]

It seems that Iamblichus wrote to Julian to reprove him for the rarity of his letters. The Prince replies that even if the reproof is deserved, the excuse for his fault lies in the natural timidity with which he is overcome at the mere idea of corresponding with such a man, and then he exclaims: "Oh, generous one! thou who art the recognised preserver of Hellenism, thou shouldst write to us without stint, and excuse, as far as possible, our hesitation. As the sun, when it emits its purest

[1] It is true that their authenticity is doubted by Zeller (p. 680), because, according to Eunapius (p. 21), Iamblichus died while Constantine was still living, and, therefore, before Julian could have known him. But Eunapius is an historian so untrustworthy and confused that we feel authorised to doubt the accuracy of his assertion. And, on the other hand, we cannot understand what could have been the reason for inventing letters from Julian to Iamblichus, when Julian's tragic death had destroyed every trace of his attempt. Besides, these letters, of which we shall examine some parts, bear the unquestionable imprint of Julian's peculiar style, so that it appears to us impossible to deny their authenticity. Perhaps they were not addressed to Iamblichus, but to some other leader of the Neo-Platonic movement, *e.g.* Maximus or Chrysantius. But as they did not bear any address, a copyist, long afterwards, deceived by the hyperbolic sentences, on his own initiative, put the address of the most noted chief of the school to which Julian gloried in belonging, here and there altering the text, and introducing particulars, especially in the XLth Epistle, that do not correspond with the real facts of Julian's life.

rays, acts according to its nature, without considering who may benefit by its rays, so thou, while inundating the Hellenic world with light, shouldst unhesitatingly bestow thy treasures even on those who, out of timidity or respect, do not render unto thee the equivalent. Even Æsculapius does not cure men for the hope of a recompense, but simply follows the philanthropic impulse that is natural to him. This thou shouldst also do, who art the physician of the soul and the mind, in order to safeguard by every means the teachings of virtue, like a good archer, who, even when he has no adversary at hand, keeps his hand ready for every contingency. Certainly the result is not equal for us and for thee: for us, when we receive thy masterstrokes; for thee, when, by chance, thou dost receive some sent by us. Even if we wrote thousands and thousands of times, it would be mere gambolling, like those children in Homer who, on the seashore, build up mud buildings which they let the tide destroy. But thy slightest word is more efficacious than the most fecundating current, and a single letter of Iamblichus is dearer to me than all the gold of Lydia. If thou hast the slightest affection for one who loves thee,—and thou hast, if I am not mistaken,—remember that we are like chickens, always ready for the food that thou bringest us, and do thou write to us continually, and do not fail to support us with thy virtue."[1]

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, 540, 16 sq.

Here we have another outburst of enthusiasm on the reception of a letter from the philosopher: ". . . I am with thee, even when thou art absent, and I see thee with my soul as if thou wert present, and I can never have too much of thee. Thou never ceasest to benefit those with thee, and the absent, to whom thou dost write, are rejoiced and saved at the same time. In fact, just now, when they announced to me that a friend had arrived bearing a letter from thee, I had been for three days afflicted with a gastric disorder, with pains all over my body, so that I could not get rid of the fever. But, as I said, as soon as I heard that, outside the door, there was one who was bringing me thy letter, I jumped up, as one beside himself, rushing out before even he could be there. And as soon as I had the letter in my hands, I swear to thee by the gods, and by that very affection that binds me to thee, all my pains and the fever disappeared, as if frightened away by the invincible presence of a saviour. Then, when I had opened the letter and read it, thou mayst imagine my state of mind and the fulness of my happiness! I thanked and kissed that 'beloved spirit,' as thou callest him, that truly loving intermediary of thy virtues, through whose instrumentality I had received thy writings. Like a bird helped on by a propitious breath of wind, he had brought me a letter that was not only a source of pleasure because it contained news of thee, but also dissipated my

ills. Is it possible for me to describe all I felt in reading this letter? Would it be possible for me to find words sufficient to express my love? How many times did I read it half through, and then returned to the beginning! How often did I not fear to forget that which I had learnt in it! How often, as in the arrangement of a strophe, did I unite the end of it with the beginning, as, in a song, repeating, at the end of the rhythm, the melody of the beginning! How often did I carry the letter to my lips, as a mother who kisses her child! How often did I press my lips on it, as if embracing the most ardently beloved mistress! How often, kissing it, have I spoken to, and gazed at, the superscription that bore, like a deep-set seal, the trace of thy hand, seeking to find in the form of the letters the imprint of the fingers of thy sainted right hand! . . . And if ever Jupiter grants to me to return to my native soil, and I am permitted to visit thy sacred hearth, thou must not spare me, but thou must chain me, as a fugitive, to the beloved benches of thy school, treating me as a deserter of the Muses, and correcting me by means of punishments. And I will submit joyfully to the castigation, and with a grateful soul, as if it were the providential and redeeming castigation of a devoted father. For if thou wouldst rely on the judgment that I would pass on myself, and allow me to act as I wish, O wonderful man! it would be for me the greatest bliss to attach myself to thy

tunic, and never leave thee, for any reason whatsoever, but remain always with thee, and follow thee wherever thou goest, as those twin men described in the old fables. And probably the fables in which this is related appear to be mere jokes, but, in reality, they allude to that which is most sublime in friendship, representing, in the tie that unites them, the homogeneity of soul in both."[1]

Notwithstanding that, in the ardent phrases of this letter, we recognise the influence of a fictitious exaltation, it is impossible not to admit that it is the manifestation of a sincere feeling. No other sovereign has ever written to a professor of philosophy as Julian wrote to his teachers. Julian, in his relation to Hellenism, was in almost the same position as that of the primitive Christians, who passionately espoused an idea which they saw adopted and understood by so few. He earnestly intended to exercise the mission of an apostle,—a mission on which depended the fate of humanity,—and therefore he felt for those, who appeared to him as the initiators, the champions of a great movement of religious restoration and moral reformation, a deep sense of veneration, before which his Imperial dignity paled and bowed humbly to the very ground. Julian was a saint of Hellenism, and he would not have hesitated, for an instant, to embrace martyrdom, and, hero as he was, joyfully to encounter death. He therefore, like all saints,

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 578, 21 sq.

gloried in humiliating himself before the ideal grandeur of the heralds of that principle of faith in which he had found the regeneration of his spirit. It certainly makes a curious impression, to see such exaggerated devotion for the teachers of this superstitious Neo-Platonism that had already so greatly degenerated from the pure pantheism of the great Plotinus. But, in the first place, we have seen how Neo-Platonism, lacking a divine figure and a well-determined worship, had necessarily become corrupt, and had degenerated into a coarse and confused symbolism. In the second place, we must not forget that Julian was a young enthusiast, a scholar devoted to the ancient civilisation, but not a profound or precise thinker. For this reason, the confused creations of the Neo-Platonism of his time could easily take possession of his excitable fancy. Besides, that which really lay nearest to Julian's heart was Hellenism, the restoration and preservation of its laws, its customs, its literature, and its arts, which had been the ornament and glory of the Greek world. His enthusiasm for Neo-Platonism was a secondary consideration. Julian was a fervent Neo-Platonist, because he was a fervent Hellenist. He saw in the symbolical religion of Neo-Platonism the only possible substitute for militant Christianity. In the war he waged against this new power, which threatened his native civilisation with destruction, he raised, as a holy banner, the colours of his mystical teachers.

Julian's enthusiasm for the idea that was so dear to him, and for the men who represented it, is a sure indication of the generous and excitable nature of his character. This disposition is especially revealed in the letters to his friends, and they are couched in a form and style which we at the present epoch would consider "decadent," or, to express it more clearly, in a style that reproduced the exquisite artifice of a mind delighting in the endless elaboration of its own impressions and its own thoughts, and by the subtlety of its art weakened the efficacy and power of its sentiments. But there was in Julian the writer a grace that withstood and overcame all the artifices of style. See, for example, those short notes he wrote to Libanius, a master whom he venerated no less than Iamblichus and Maximus. Libanius had promised to send him one of his orations, and it failed to arrive. So Julian writes:[1]—

"Since thou hast forgotten thy promise (it is already the third day and the philosopher Priscus has not yet arrived, and he writes to me that he must still delay), this is to remind thee to pay thy debt. Yes, a debt which, as thou knowest well, is most easy for thee to pay and most pleasant for me to receive. Send me, therefore, thy discourse and thy holy admonitions; but, in the name of Mercury and of the Muses, send it to me at once, for in these three days thou hast really consumed me, if the

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 482, 21 sq.

saying of the Sicilian poet be true, that expectation ages one in a day. If this be true, and I know it is, thou hast aged me three times, O dearest friend! I dictate all this in the midst of my occupations. I am no longer capable of writing, because my hand is much slower than my tongue, although even my tongue, for lack of exercise, has become slow and embarrassed. Keep well, O most longed-for and beloved of men!"

And having received this long-expected oration, the enthusiastic Emperor writes to Libanius:[1]—

"Yesterday I read most of your discourse before dinner. After dinner I read, without stopping, the rest. Happy thou who canst so speak, and still more happy thou who canst so think! What logic, what skill, what synthesis, what analysis, what argumentation, what order, what exordia, what style, what harmony, what composition!"

And to his beloved Maximus, who, after having remained some time near him, desires to go away, he writes:[2]—

"The wise Homer decided that we should receive with all hospitality the guest who arrives, and let him go when he so desires. But between us two there is much more than the benevolence arising from the duties of hospitality, that is to say, that which is derived from the education we have received and our devotion to the gods; so

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 494, 1 sq. [2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, 537, 4 sq.

that no one would be able to accuse me of infringing the law of Homer, if I wished to keep thee a longer time near me. But seeing that thy frail body had need of greater care, I allowed thee to return home, and have provided for the comforts of thy journey. Thou canst, therefore, use the state coach. May Æsculapius, together with all the other gods, travel with thee, and permit us to meet again!"

When the affection is less strong, the phrasing becomes more artificial and laboured, as in the following note to Eugenius:[1]—

"It is said that Dædalus, when he fashioned the wings for Icarus, dared by art to insult nature. I praise his art, although not admiring his thought of entrusting the safety of his son to soluble wax. But if it were granted me, as the poet of Theos says, to exchange my nature for that of a bird, I would not fly towards Olympus or a sighing mistress, but to the lowest slopes of thy mountains, so that I might embrace thee, O my one thought, as Sappho sings. But since nature, encumbering me with the bonds of the body, has made it impossible for me to soar to heaven, I will come by means of the wings of my words, and I write to, and am with, thee as much as I can. And thus, for no other reason, did Homer call words 'winged,' because, like the fleetest of birds, they are able to penetrate everywhere, and alight wheresoever they

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 498, 10 sq.

choose. Do thou, therefore, write also, O my friend, since thou hast equal, if not stronger wings to thy words, by means of which thou canst easily overtake thy friends, and give them as much pleasure as if thou thyself wert present."

To his friend Amœrius, who had announced to him the death of his wife, he writes a most sympathetic letter. In it there is a kindly Stoicism, much more humane than the unmoved and serene Stoicism of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius.[1]

"Not without tears did I read the letter that thou hast written me announcing the death of thy consort, in which thou hast expressed the depth of thy affliction. Because, not only is it in itself a most piteous circumstance that a woman, young and wise, beloved by her husband, and mother to good children, should expire prematurely, as a flaming torch that burns brightly and is suddenly extinguished, but to me it is no less sad to think that this misfortune has happened to thee. For, least of all, did our good Amœrius deserve this affliction, a man so wise and the best beloved of our friends. Now, if, in similar circumstances, it was my duty to write to another, I should feel bound to indite a long discourse, to impress upon him that such occurrences are natural, and ought to be borne, as they are inevitable, and so inordinate weeping is of no avail; and I would repeat, in short, all those platitudes that might comfort an ignorant

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 532, 10 sq.

man in his sorrow. But, as I am addressing one capable of teaching others, it would seem to me out of place to write a discourse that could only be applicable to those who lack wisdom. Permit me instead, putting aside all other considerations, to recall to thee the myth, and at the same time the reasoning of a wise man, with which perhaps thou art already acquainted, but which is ignored by the generality of mankind. If thou wilt use it as a consoling remedy, thou mayst find in it a consolation for thy grief, equal to that which Telemachus found in the cup offered to him with the same intention by the woman from Sparta.

"It is said that Democritus of Abdera, when he failed to find words wherewith to console Darius, who was mourning the death of his beautiful wife, promised him to recall the departed to life, if he would only furnish him with all that was necessary. Darius having answered him not to spare anything that would facilitate the accomplishment of the promise, Democritus, remaining a while in doubt, added that he possessed everything that was required; one thing only he lacked, and he did not know where to look for it, but that Darius, being king of the whole of Asia, would be able, immediately and easily, to find it. And Darius asked him what was the thing that the king alone was able to discover. Democritus is said to have answered, that if he could write on the tomb of his wife the names of three men who had been entirely

free from affliction, she would suddenly come back to life, thus transgressing the laws of death. Darius was much embarrassed because he could not succeed in finding any one who had escaped all misfortunes, and then Democritus, smiling as usual, said to him: 'Why, therefore, O most unreasonable of men, dost thou grieve so excessively, as if thou alone had experienced so great a misfortune, when it is impossible for thee to find in all past generations a single person who has not suffered some domestic trouble?' Now, one can understand that Darius, an uncivilised and uncultured barbarian, a slave to pleasure and passion, had to be taught all this. But thou who art a Greek, and hast received a most liberal education, shouldst find the remedy in thyself, and if it does not become stronger with time, it would be a slur cast on reason!"

Julian, when he became Emperor, desired to retain the friendship of his old schoolmates, and was never more happy than when one of these evinced a disposition to approach him and visit his Court. To his friend Basil, who had written to him to announce his coming, he replies with the following kind and encouraging letter:—

"The proverb says, 'Thou dost not announce war,' and I add to this the saying of the comedy, 'Thou announcest golden promises.' Come on, then, and follow up thy words with thy actions,

and hasten to come to us. The friend will welcome the friend. Our continual community of occupations in affairs appears troublesome to those who have not accustomed themselves to it. But those who have these cares in common become serviceable, courteous, and ready to do everything, as I myself have experienced. Those whom I have around me, make my task more easy, so that, while not neglecting my duties, I am also able to rest. We associate without the hypocrisy of Courts, which I believe, up to this time, is the only thing with which thou art acquainted, and, under the cover of this, courtiers, while profusely praising one another, in their hearts hate each other with a hatred greater than that of sworn foes. We, on the contrary, though reproving and scolding each other, when necessary, are most loving and intimate friends. Thus we are able to labour without effort, not to be intolerant of work, and to sleep peacefully. For when I keep watch, I keep watch, not so much for myself, as in the interest of others, as is my duty. But perhaps I bewilder you with my idle chatter and nonsense, and, by praising myself, I cut a poor figure, similar to that of Astydamas. I have, however, written all this to thee, as I wish to persuade thee to profit by the occasion to render thyself useful to us by thy presence, wise man as thou art. Hasten, therefore, and use the Government courier. When thou hast remained with us as long as it is pleasant to thee, we will give thee

our permission to go wherever it will appear to thee best."[1]

[1] The Basil to whom is addressed the letter that we have quoted, evidently cannot be Basil the Great, the Bishop of Cæsarea, the companion of the two Gregories in the struggle for the Orthodox doctrines. It is true that Basil was a fellow-student with Julian and Gregory of Nazianzus at the school of Athens. But it is clear that Julian could never have addressed himself in such friendly terms to one of the strongest champions of Christianity, nor would he have asked advice of him, and, moreover, in this letter, he alludes to a young man who has been accustomed to associate only with courtiers —a proof that it could not have been Basil the Bishop. Therefore this letter, undoubtedly authentic, is not less undoubtedly addressed to quite another Basil than the Christian Basil. But in the Epistles of Julian, we find another letter (p. 596) which is undoubtedly addressed to the Christian Basil, but this is no less undoubtedly apocryphal. The ignorant conceit that inspires this letter, which appears to be written by a vulgar boaster, cannot be attributed to Julian, with whose wit and modesty we are thoroughly acquainted. It is easy to detect the impostor, who writes after all the events have happened. Julian describes in this letter, with an hyperbolic conceit, the greatness of his power, recognised by all the nations of the earth, and only despised by Basil. To punish him for his hostile attitude, he orders him to bring an enormous contribution in money, which he needs for his expedition to Persia, and threatens to destroy Cæsarea, if perchance the Bishop should have the audacity to refuse. The contents and the style of this letter are quite sufficient to demonstrate its apocryphal character. But the most evident proof of all is given in the ending, in which the forger falls into the most absurd blunder by misquoting particulars furnished by Sozomenes. This historian narrates that Apollinaris of Syria, a Christian scholar, author of translations of the Bible into Greek verse and of moral tracts, written after the style of the classical models, had composed a treatise to refute the philosophical errors professed by Julian and his teachers. Julian, Sozomenes says, having read the treatise, is reported to have answered the bishops who had sent him the book, in only the three following words: "I have read, I have understood, I have condemned." And the bishops are reported to have answered on their side: "Thou hast read, but thou hast not understood, for if thou couldst have understood, thou wouldst not have condemned." And Sozomenes adds that this answer was by some attributed to Basil (*v.* Sozom., *op. cit.*, 507). Now, the counterfeiter who has invented Julian's letter has put at the end of the letter, apparently without rhyme or reason, the three words with which the Emperor

A most charming and interesting letter is that addressed by Julian to his friend Evargius, to make him the present of a small property :[1]—

"I place at thy disposal a little property of four fields in Bithynia, which I inherited from my grandmother. It is certainly not sufficient to make a man who comes into possession of it imagine that he has acquired something very great, and, on that account, become proud; but the gift will not be wholly displeasing to thee, if thou wilt permit me to tell thee, one by one, its many qualities. I may be allowed to jest with thee, who art so full of wit and amiability. The property is about twenty stadia distant from the sea, and there are no merchants or boatmen to spoil the landscape with their chatter and aggressiveness. However, the gifts of Nereus do not fail there; the fish are fresh and still quivering, and, from an eminence, at a short distance from the house, thou wilt be able to see the Propontis, and the islands and the town which has taken its name from the great Emperor; thou wilt not tread on fucus and seaweed, nor be disgusted by the nauseous refuse cast up by the sea on the shore and other unnamed filth, but thou wilt have around thee evergreen trees, and thyme, and fragrant herbs. Ah! what delightful peace to lie down among them, idly perusing a

answered the treatise of Apollinaris—words that, on this occasion, are unreasonable, and therefore incomprehensible.

[1] Julian, *op. cit.*, 549, 18 sq.

book, and, from time to time, resting the eye on the cheerful picture of the ships and sea! When I was a youth this property was most dear to me, because of its limpid springs, a delicious bathing-place, and a kitchen-garden and trees. When I became a man, I often longed to see the old place, and I went there often, and with reason. There you will find a modest specimen of my agricultural knowledge —a tiny vine that produces a sweet and perfumed wine not needing time to perfect it. Thou wilt see there Bacchus and the Graces. The bunches of grapes, still on the vine or passed through the press, have the perfume of roses, and the new wine, in the amphora, I may say with Homer, is a draught of nectar. Ah! why is not this vineyard larger? Perhaps I was not a far-seeing agriculturist. But as I am temperate in my tributes to Bacchus, and much prefer the Nymphs, I only planted that which was sufficient for myself and my friends—a commodity always scarce among men. This gift is for thee, O my dear chief! It is small, but will be acceptable, as coming from a friend to a friend, and 'to the house from the house,' as the wise poet Pindar has it. I wrote this letter most hastily by lamplight, so if thou findest some mistake, do not reproach me too harshly or as one rhetorician does another."

This letter is a little masterpiece. In it there vibrates a feeling for nature, most rare among the ancients, and an exquisite delicacy not possible, save

to a soul open only to the beautiful. How many thoughts must have crossed the mind of the meditative youth who, from the solitary hill, immersed in the pages of Homer, from time to time, contemplated the sea, the ships, and Constantinople in the distance! This last son of Greece experienced all the magic influence of Hellenic thought and civilisation, which the religion of his tormentors wished to destroy, and he dreamt to save this civilisation, to give it a new life, to save the gods of whom his favourite poets had so divinely sung —those poets who had brought so much glory to a world that now repudiated them!

We see how, in the midst of his tempestuous adventures, the soul of Julian was able to remain serene and susceptible to all the emotions inspired by nature and art. He endeavoured to act in all things rationally, and believed himself successful in his efforts to curb all his passionate impulses. His counsels are always inspired by the most clear wisdom. To a friend he writes:[1] "We are happy to hear that, in the management of affairs, thou dost strive to temper severity with kindness; for to unite forbearance and kindness with firmness and strength, the first so needed with the docile, and the second with the wicked, for their correction, is a proof, I believe, of no ordinary character and virtue. With this end in view, we pray thee to harmonise these dispositions to the general good,

[1] Julian, *op. cit.*, 521, 11 sq.

since the most wise among the ancients justly believed that such should be the aim of all virtue. Mayst thou live as long and happily as it is possible, O brother most longed-for and beloved!"

The rectitude and courage possessed by Julian, and so justly admired by Ammianus Marcellinus and Libanius, are most evident in the letter directed by him to Oribasius, his physician, at the time of his disagreements with Florentius in Gaul, whose financial abuses he was endeavouring to rectify. After having related to Oribasius the dream about the two trees, of which we have already read,[1] Julian thus continues: "As for that vile eunuch, I should like to know if he said those things you refer to me, before or after he had met me. As to his actions, it is well known that several times, when he treated the inhabitants of this province most unjustly, I kept silent even more than it was my duty to do, refusing to listen to this one, not receiving the next, and not believing the third, ever attributing his faults to those who were around him. But when he attempted to make me a partner in his shameless frauds, by forwarding to me his infamous reports, what could I do? Be silent, or fight it out? The first course was ignoble, servile, and wicked; the second, just and courageous, but not permissible under existing circumstances. What did I, therefore, do? In the presence of many persons whom I well knew would repeat to

[1] See vol. i. p. 86.

him my words, I exclaimed: 'He must certainly rectify these reports, as they are most reprehensible.' Notwithstanding that he had heard this, and was so near me, he refused to act with wisdom, and committed crimes which would have been impossible to a tyrant who still possessed an atom of reason. And now, how should a man who follows the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle act on such an occasion? Not take any interest in the unfortunate people, and let them fall a prey to thieves, or defend them by every means in his power? But to me it appears shameful that while in war the officers who abandon their troops are condemned to death and deprived of all funeral honours, it should be permitted to abandon the ranks of these unfortunate people when they must struggle against thieves; besides, we have God on our side—God who gave us our position. And if it fall to my lot to suffer on account of this, I shall feel myself not a little encouraged by my conscience. And even if I were obliged to yield my position to a successor, it would not grieve me, because a short and useful life is to be preferred to one that is long and full of evil."[1]

Julian's account corresponds so exactly with the description of Florentius and with the episode related by Libanius that it seems impossible to raise any doubts concerning the identity of this person. But that he should call him a "eunuch"

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 496, 15 sq.

is inexplicable, as Florentius had a wife and children. Some see, therefore, in this enemy of whom Julian speaks the courtier Eusebius—that eunuch who ruled at his will the Court of Constantius, and pursued Julian with his bitter hatred. To this end, they imagine that Eusebius was sent by the Emperor to Gaul to make an inspection, and that hence arose the conflict with Julian.[1] This is, of course, possible, but is, undoubtedly, invented, and it is far more reasonable to suppose that the word "*ἀνδρόγυνος*" was simply meant as an insult, rather than as the indication of a real condition.

However, notwithstanding this great wisdom with which Julian strove to direct his life, he, as we have seen in the course of these studies, sometimes abandoned himself to the influence of passion. It is certainly impossible to admire either his conduct towards the courtiers of Constantine on the morrow of his victory, or to justify his fury against Athanasius. In his private correspondence we find traces of untrammelled desires and of deplorable excesses. The case is, however, curious, and serves to throw light on his figure so full of complications and contradictions. Julian had a real mania for reading. We have seen with what transports of joy he thanked the Empress Eusebia, who, when he was about to leave Milan for Gaul, made him a present of a whole library,

[1] Kock, *Kaiser Julian*, 449.

knowing that he was absolutely without books. When Bishop George was assassinated in Alexandria, the Emperor sent a good scolding to the Alexandrians,[1] but did not further punish them, and it is no hasty judgment to say that he was not displeased with a tumult apparently fomented by hatred against the Christians. Julian seemed preoccupied by only one thought, *i.e.*, that of getting possession of the books belonging to the murdered Bishop. To gratify this desire, he displays an energy that degenerates into injustice and cruelty. As soon as he hears of the death of George, he writes to the Prefect of Egypt:[2] "Some love horses, others love birds, others again, ferocious animals. I, from my earliest childhood, have never loved anything more than I do books. It would, therefore, be absurd that I should allow these men to take possession of them, who do not consider gold sufficient to satisfy their lust for riches, and think that they may easily deprive me of them. You will, therefore, do me a signal favour by collecting all the books of George. He had many of them concerning philosophy and rhetoric, and many that contained the doctrine of the impious Galileans. I would willingly see the last-named all destroyed, if I did not fear that some good and useful books might, at the same time, by mistake be destroyed. Make, therefore, the most minute search concerning them. In this search

[1] See vol. ii. p. 340 sq. [2] Julian., *op. cit.*, 487, 11 sq.

the secretary of George may be of great help to you, and if he really will afford you all necessary information concerning them, give him his freedom in recompense. But if he try to deceive you in this affair, submit him immediately to the torture. I know most of George's books, if not all of them; for he lent them to me when I was staying in Cappadocia, in order that I might copy them, and then took them back."

It appears that the Prefect of Egypt was that unhappy Ædychius who, a little time afterwards, felt all the brunt of Julian's anger because he did not show himself sufficiently energetic against Athanasius. It seems that he did not have much success in his efforts to collect the books of the murdered Bishop, and that even the torture inflicted on the secretary did not help him to attain his aim. This is evident, for we find among his letters the following note directed to Porphyry, who must have been an official in the Egyptian Administration:[1] "George had a large and magnificent library. There were books of philosophy of all schools, many histories, and not an inferior number of books of the Galileans. Search again for this library in great haste, and send it to me in Antioch, and remember that thou wilt expose thyself to a most severe punishment if thou dost not take every precaution to find it; and if thou dost not succeed by means of threats

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 351, 20 sq.

and oaths of all kinds, and if slaves have anything to do with it, apply the torture unsparingly, and oblige those who are suspected of having stolen some of the books to come and return them to thee."

Now, although such a love for books and culture appears most admirable in a man like Julian, it by no means justifies the violent proceedings that made him appear cruel and tyrannical. This is indeed a great blot on the character of our hero. But we believe the case to be unique, *i.e.*, that a man powerful and wise in every respect should lose his head to the extent of becoming positively iniquitous for the love of books! Here we have before us the man in his entirety, with all his innate contradictions and his marvellous versatility. We must remember that, at that time, Julian was in Antioch, where, in a few months, he was able to organise the difficult Persian expedition — an occupation to which he applied himself with all the intensity of a mind nurtured on military experiences. These most absorbing cares did not prevent him, as we have seen in the *Misopogon*, from indulging in polemics with the Antiochians, and from attending to an infinite variety of religious and administrative affairs. But, in the midst of all these preoccupations, he still retained such freedom and serenity of mind as to feel the longing to possess the philosophical library of a murdered Bishop. In

reality, he would have been much more pleased to have these volumes in his possession, many of which were already known to him, and recalled to his memory the beloved studies of his youth, and to be able to unroll respectfully and tenderly those papyri, containing the treasures of antique wisdom, to scan these least known documents of Christian literature, to find in them new arms to combat more efficaciously Christianity—this, we maintain, would have been much more acceptable to him than all the pomp and circumstance of Imperial power, and even, perhaps, than his hoped-for victories over Persia. A most singular Emperor! And even more than singular, because his crotchets as a scholar and man of letters did not prevent him from being a heroic adventurer, a great captain, and a wise administrator.

If Julian had not been absorbed in his religious Utopia, and had not rushed to his own ruin, he would have been able to reorganise the empire on the basis of a wise government, and restore its prosperity, as he had done in Gaul. In the intercourse we have had with Julian, in the various contingencies of his existence, and under the many aspects in which he has been revealed to us, we have found the most striking proofs of his lofty idea of justice, which is not only recognised by Libanius, but also by that impartial and severe judge, Ammianus. And we have already seen that one of his most determined purposes was

that of directing the administration of public affairs and the Imperial Court, so as to free the State from the appalling abuses by which it was corrupted, thus lightening the burden under which the people groaned and steadily diminished in numbers. Gaul had hailed him as the restorer of the public fortune; the Hebrews were delivered from the arbitrary taxes with which they had been charged. If the Persian enterprise still necessitated heavy contributions from his subjects, the Emperor had declared, as we have learned from Libanius, that his victorious return would be the signal of a financial reform by which the exhausted economic conditions of the empire would be thoroughly relieved. The radical purification of the Imperial Court, and the expulsion of the numberless parasites enriched at the public expense, which Julian accomplished as soon as he entered Constantinople, may have been hasty, according to Ammianus and Socrates, but was undoubtedly most beneficial from a financial point of view, and the most eloquent affirmation of the young Emperor's justice. Finally, the intense care with which he enforced the law that no one should be excused from taking part in the official duties to which they were called, and that all privileges should be abolished, thus rendering all citizens equal with regard to the risks and duties of public administration—a law against which the Christians, to whom the previous emperors had exclusively

granted these privileges, violently protested, as if it were an infringement of their rights—must be cordially approved by all impartial judges.

There is, however, one act of Julian's administration that we especially desire to notice, since it proves the solicitude for the public good by which he was inspired, and also his ability to descend from the nebulous heights of his mystical speculations, and to set apart his preoccupations as a general and a reformer to frame practical arrangements of affairs.

In the letters and notes which Julian addresses to his friends, we have often seen that he gives them permission to use the Government conveyance. When he invited the Arian Aëtius to come to him, he allowed him to use an extra horse. These curious allusions refer to one of the acts of administration in which Julian was deeply interested, that is to say, the reorganisation of the Imperial Postal Service. The communications between the different parts of the empire—which consisted of almost all the known world—were rendered possible and relatively easy by an admirable network of roads, the greatest pride of the Roman organisation. On these roads they organised a regular service of transports and couriers, of post-houses for the relays and the accommodation of travellers, which greatly facilitated traffic for the Government and the public. The expenses of maintaining this postal system were

supported by the provinces and the cities through which the roads passed. Even into this service abuses had penetrated, so that, in the times preceding Julian's government, they had become so great as completely to disorganise it. All the Imperial officials, high and low, had distributed to whom they best liked, free passes, *evectiones*, and the municipal finances, already exhausted, had to bear the expense of the citizens who travelled. The Councils, the Episcopal Synods, which, under the reign of Constantius, followed each other with increasing frequency, in the most remote sees, and to which the prelates hurried in shoals, attended by their theological attendants, and surrounded by all the luxury of a corrupt and overbearing clergy, more especially brought confusion and disorder into the postal management, and forced upon the tax-payers most enormous expenses. Ammianus, using words in which an ironical intention is most evident, describes "the multitude of bishops careering backwards and forwards from one Synod to the other, with horses and carriages belonging to the public service," and adds that Constantius was so intent in his efforts to regulate theological doctrines according to his arbitrary will, that he cut off the sinews of the postal system—"rei vehicularię succideret nervos."[1] Libanius gives a most curious description of the deplorable conditions into which the service had fallen, because

[1] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, i. 263.

of the terrible abuses to which it had been subjected. The city authorities could no longer withstand the exigencies of the travellers. The animals died of fatigue, the drivers and couriers escaped to the mountains to free themselves from a labour that had become insupportable.[1]

Julian was no sooner on the Imperial throne than with a firm hand he put an end to all these abuses, and regulated by law the bestowal of free passes, the *evectiones*, that only could be granted by the governors of the provinces. The inferior magistrates had a limited number of them, and, in each case, they were obliged to obtain special authorisations from the Emperor. The effects of this reform were most salutary and rapid. Libanius, after giving the singular description which we have quoted above, and saying that the Town Councils, on which the expenses rested, were totally ruined, thus continues: "Julian stopped the abuses, prohibiting travel that was not absolutely necessary, and affirming that gratuitous services were equally dangerous to those who granted them and to those who received them. And we saw"—Libanius goes on to say, with his usual exaggeration—"a thing that seemed incredible, *i.e.*, the drivers obliged to exercise their mules and the coachmen their horses; for, as they had once suffered from the effects of over-work, they now suffered from the lack of exercise."[2] Taking into due consideration the

[1] Liban., *op. cit.*, i. 569, 9 sq.

[2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, i. 570, 11 sq.

hyperbolical tone of the apologist, the fact still remains that it was a great merit in Julian to have devised and effected this wise and civilising reform. The scrupulous care with which he applied this law is evident from the very few permits for free passes that he granted to some of his friends whom he desired should visit him. This law established by Julian must have been strictly obeyed, if it was necessary to have the direct permission of the Emperor to obtain a favour that, only a short time before, was the acknowledged right of the majority.

Julian's conduct as administrator of an immense empire is, therefore, no less admirable than that of Julian the leader of powerful armies and the organiser of great and hazardous enterprises. The only administrative error that he committed was the economic violence he exercised concerning the markets of Antioch. With the exception of this mistake, mostly due to the good intention of the sovereign, and to the absolute ignorance of economic principles in which ancient society existed, we cannot find in Julian's too short reign a single act that does not justify the assertion of Libanius, who says that if time had been conceded to him, he would have restored the prosperity of the whole empire, as he had already restored that of Gaul.

The integrity and kindness of the private

individual are evidently demonstrated by his letters, many of which we have examined, and they give evidence of the exquisite delicacy of soul possessed by this youth, who had passed the best years of his life amidst the hardening influences of war, in the unrefined atmosphere of military encampments. There is, however, one circumstance in Julian's history that has remained obscure, and concerning which his contemporaries, groping in the dark, have woven a net of suspicions and legends. We allude to the relationship between Julian and the Empress Eusebia, and of his conduct towards his wife Helena. We have already seen that Ammianus Marcellinus, even though a friend of Julian and an admirer of Eusebia, openly accuses the latter of having murdered Helena by means of a slow poison, which was given to her by Eusebia; but in order to diminish the responsibility of Eusebia, the good Ammianus says that it was done to prevent Helena from bearing children. We have also seen that other calumnious reports were circulated, according to which Julian was said to have poisoned his wife himself, with the aid of a doctor.[1] Fortunately, Libanius can with great ease demolish the aforesaid accusation. But the fact in itself that such an accusation was possible, combined with the extraordinary reports related by Ammianus, proves that, if not among the people,

[1] See vol. i. p. 94.

at least in Court circles, scandal was rife that some sort of love drama had been interwoven in the life of the young sovereign. We say in Court circles, because, if the scandalous story had been disseminated among the people, Gregory would certainly have heard it, and this would have furnished him with most precious oratorical matter, and it is easy to imagine what joy it would have afforded the terrible polemical writer to have such an argument for one of his eloquent invectives.[1]

If we examine with greater attention this obscure episode, we find that suspicion might have arisen not so much from the public relations of Julian with his cousin Eusebia, but rather from his conduct towards his wife Helena. Julian, as we know,[2] came twice to Milan while the beautiful Empress was there; the first time in 354, when he was summoned there after the murder of Gallus, to be impeached and probably killed, if Eusebia had not intervened.

Julian was banished to Como, and, later on,

[1] Among the moderns, Anatole France, as far as we know, is the only writer who affirms the positive existence of a love affair between Julian and Eusebia. "La nature du sentiment qui unissait Eusébie et Julien n'est guère douteuse. . . . Tel qu'il était Eusébie l'aime" (*vide* A. France, *Vie Littéraire*, iv. 252). When the witty French critic wrote the above-mentioned lines, he was evidently not acquainted with the bust of Acerenza. If he had seen it, he would perhaps have found, in the overpowering manliness of Julian's figure, an additional proof of the possibility that the most beautiful Empress loved her unfortunate cousin.

[2] See vol. i. p. 45 and p. 52 sq.

sent to Athens ; the second time at the end of 355, to be invested with the dignity of Cæsar, always through the influence that Eusebia exercised over her husband. Now, it seems highly improbable that, during these two visits, the Prince could possibly have had secret intercourse with the Empress. The Court of Constantius was filled with the most determined of Julian's enemies, who spied his every movement, and who would have snatched at any occasion to prejudice the mind of the Emperor against this hated prince, and together with him the audacious woman to whose irresistible fascinations the enamoured Constantius willingly submitted. Julian, in his panegyric on Eusebia, speaks of her as a divine apparition, before which he experiences sentiments of timidity, reverence, and profound gratitude. We recognise in it the devotion of a devoted subject, but not that of a passionate lover. But it might be observed that this panegyric was an official document, and that Julian could not betray Eusebia and himself. This reserve was imposed by the most elementary prudence. But the greatest importance is to be attached to the narration made by Julian himself in his manifesto to the Athenians, in which he speaks of his hesitation to send a letter to the Empress on the day in which his election to Cæsar was being decided,[1] for fear that the letter might be discovered. Here Julian undoubtedly tells the truth. In 361, when

[1] See vol. i. p. 53.

Julian wrote his manifesto, Eusebia was dead. Julian was a declared rebel, and there was no reason why he should not speak freely, no scruples of prudence necessitating him to conceal the truth. We must, therefore, believe him, when he affirms that his relations with Eusebia were so far from being intimate that he was not only unable to speak to her, but did not even dare to send her a note. Therefore, between these cousins there existed no intimacy, much less a love intrigue. Their mutual sympathy must have arisen, above all, from the identity of their intellectual aspirations. Eusebia, born in Macedonia, was of Greek descent, and had been educated in Greece, in the very midst of the traditions and habits of the ancient civilisation; so that, Julian says, besides her beauty, she brought in dowry a cultivated intelligence and a good education.[1] Married to a Christian emperor, and entering a court in which the great dignitaries of Arianism ruled supreme, she necessarily followed the religious customs of those who surrounded her. But her intellectual preferences must have been for Hellenism, in which she had been educated. Now, although Julian had remained away from the court, she must have heard of his passion for study and of his intimacy with the philosophers of the time. Eusebia, therefore, saw in Julian a genuine Greek; she could understand his aspira-

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 140, 5 sq.

tions, and admire the manner in which he behaved. From this arose the desire to save him from the storm of Christian barbarism that threatened to destroy him. Julian himself, in his panegyric on Eusebia, thus explains her reasons for protecting him: "She was for me the cause of so many benefits, because she wished to honour through me the name of philosophy. This name, I do not know why, had been applied to me, who although loving it most fervently, have been obliged to cease from practising it. But she wished to honour this name. I can neither imagine nor understand any other reason why she has so effectually assisted me,—a true saviour,—and why she employed every effort to preserve intact the Emperor's benevolence towards me."[1] It is Eusebia to whom Julian owes that which he considers the greatest happiness of his life, *i.e.*, being sent to Athens, where he could immerse himself in his studies; it is Eusebia, as we already know,[2] who furnishes Julian, when starting for Gaul, with that rich and varied library, by means of which, as he says, Gaul was transformed into a museum of Greek books.

We are, therefore, soaring in an atmosphere of pure intellectuality. Eusebia and Julian appear to us as two spirits of poesy and wisdom. Eusebia, in the panegyric of Julian, is represented as surrounded by a glorious aureole of sanctity; she is

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 154, 16.

[2] See vol. i. p. 58.

truly a divine figure. In examining her portrait, as it is sketched by her devoted and grateful admirer, we seem to experience something of the fascination that the beautiful Empress exercised over the Milanese of fifteen centuries and a half ago. Ammianus Marcellinus, who had seen Eusebia at the Court of Milan, and knew all she had done in favour of Julian, has only words of praise for her virtue, and affirms, though writing after her death, that she had no rivals in beauty of form and mind, and that, in the lofty position in which she was placed, she had been able to preserve the humaneness of her soul.[1] Ammianus does not seem to suspect any illicit relationship between Julian and Eusebia, and attributes the actions of the Empress in favour of the persecuted prince to the just estimation she had formed of his qualities. But, all of a sudden, Ammianus darkens the purity of this image, by relating an episode in which the beautiful philosopher is transformed into a wicked and odious woman. We have already alluded to this fact. But we must examine it more attentively, as it is necessary to dissipate a mystery that might have a sinister influence on the judgment we have pronounced on Julian's character. We know that Constantius, when he promoted Julian to the dignity of Cæsar, bestowed upon him in marriage his own sister Helena, in order to render stronger the bonds

[1] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, i. 240.

that united him to his cousin, whom he had restored to favour. According to Julian himself, this marriage was arranged by Eusebia.[1] Helena, the daughter of the unfortunate Empress Faustina, who, according to Zosimus,[2] in 326 had been murdered by her husband Constantine in a horrible tragedy of jealousy, in November 355 could not be less than thirty years old. It appears, therefore, that Eusebia had arranged simply a *mariage de convenance*. But Helena became *enceinte* in the following year, in Gaul. Then, according to Ammianus, Eusebia bribed the nurse, and she, with an intentional error in the obstetrical operation, killed the child at the moment of its birth. But it seems that Eusebia was not satisfied with this crime. She invited Helena to come from Gaul to Rome on the occasion of the solemn visit paid by her to that city, in 357, together with Constantius. The pretext of this invitation was her affectionate anxiety that Helena should take part in the Roman festivals; the true motive was to inoculate the unfortunate woman with a subtle poison that would cause her to miscarry whenever she was pregnant. It seems that the slow action of the poison undermined the constitution of Helena, and, three years afterwards, caused her death — a mysterious death, hardly alluded to by Julian and Ammianus, but which the enemies of the former unhesitatingly attri-

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 159, 1. [2] Zosim., *op. cit.*, 150, 1 sq.

buted to him, as if he himself had been the poisoner of his wife.[1]

All these passing rumours appear to be naught else than the consequence of the idle tattle of a wicked Court accustomed to crimes. The jealousy of the mistress must be excluded as predetermining cause, as it is almost impossible to understand a jealousy that is exercised at such a great distance, without that exasperation of passion which is caused by the propinquity and sight of the beloved. The jealousy of the childless mother — Eusebia had no children — who wished to prevent her cousin from having any, and which was revealed the first time by the atrocious infanticide that she caused to be committed by the nurse, and the subtle way in which, on the second occasion, she invited Helena to Rome in order that she might give her poison, appears inadmissible and incredible in Eusebia, a woman possessing such high culture and generous impulses that she did not hesitate to undertake the perilous enterprise of saving a persecuted prince, defying the hatred and machinations of powerful courtiers. Is it possible that such a noble woman, who had done so much to place Julian in a lofty position, where his virtues could be recognised and given free scope, would condescend to base envy at the mere idea that the man she had saved and admired so

[1] See vol. i. p. 94.

greatly, should be the father of children? Is it possible that of her it might be said "tanta tamque diligens opera navabatur ne fortissimi viri soboles appareret"?[1]

It seems to us that the most probable hypothesis is that Ammianus accepted the inventions and calumnies against Eusebia that were circulating in the Court circles in which he had lived, and repeated them without any qualms of conscience, just as, with even greater shamelessness, the enemies of Julian turned directly upon him the odium of this grave accusation. We must, however, admit that, if these calumnies could have been spread abroad and believed, there must have been some facts or circumstances that gave them at least an appearance and possibility of credibility. Now, we have no document whatever upon which we can construe the true history of the relationship between Julian and his wife. Nevertheless, from some indications, we can infer that Helena was an unhappy woman, a neglected wife. Julian, who speaks and writes of every one and everything with such facility and abundance, has never, in his writings, either public or private, alluded to his wife, though she was his companion for the five years in which he lived in Gaul. In his panegyric on Eusebia, he only mentions his marriage to say that it had been arranged by her, and, in his

[1] Amm. Marcell., *op. cit.*, i. 94.

manifesto to the Athenians, he records that, at the moment of the military *pronunciamiento* at Paris, when the troops surrounded the palace, he was resting in the upper storey in a room next his wife's—"who was still living." This icy "still living"[1] (ἔτι τῆς γαμετῆς ζώσης) is Julian's only funeral oration to the memory of his wife. She died in Vienne, during the winter of 360, when her husband had already begun to act as Emperor, amidst pomps and solemn festivals. The only consideration that Julian evinced towards her was to transport her remains to Rome, where they were interred in a sepulchre of the "Via Nomentana," beside her sister Constantina.

The unhappy fate of this woman aroused the imagination of her contemporaries, and afforded elements that permitted them to create legends concerning her, and to find mystery and crime where there was naught else, perhaps, than a natural development of unfortunate circumstances. Eusebia and Julian were believed culpable, and authors of a death that was really caused by the slow and continuous persecution of a relentless fate. Julian's wife is one of those pallid figures that pass, like a fleeting shadow, across the far-off horizon of history, surrounded and consecrated by an aureole of a slow and secret martyrdom. Married when she was no longer

[1] Julian., *op. cit.*, 266, 3.

young to a man who did not love her, a Christian, and educated in Court circles, from which all Hellenic influences were severely excluded, she could neither understand her husband nor be understood by him. No intellectual sympathy could exist between the two who had been united by a simple tie of convention. The joys which she might have found in maternity had been snatched from her. During her trying sojourn in Gaul she lived in a continual state of anxiety and peril. Every day she saw the struggle between her husband and her brother growing more imminent—a struggle to prevent which she had been sacrificed and placed uselessly, as a symbol of peace, between the two rivals. The rebellion having broken out, and Julian being proclaimed Emperor, Helena was absolutely overwhelmed by the terror of a fratricidal war. Julian, wholly absorbed in his preparations, his plans, his dreams, took no heed of her. And she knew her brother too well not to be aware that, if he was victorious—and everything seemed to indicate the probability of his victory—he would take a terrible revenge. Torn by these cruel anxieties that tormented her inmost soul, Helena wasted away, and disappeared, a meek victim, neglected by a husband who was about to throw himself into the tempestuous seas of a most audacious adventure.

We can, therefore, conclude, judging with our

accustomed impartiality, that Julian, although not guilty of any domestic crime, was by no means an exemplary husband, and even, most probably, had been the cause of his wife's great unhappiness. A fault most grave in itself, but one which might have extenuating circumstances in the history of the husbands of all times, not excluding those of the present day.

CONCLUSION

When we began this study, we said that no one had ever suffered more from the inexplicable vagaries of fate than Julian. The Church, against which his efforts were ineffectually directed, revenged itself by concealing his noble figure under an odious mask, and by rendering execrable for ever a name well worthy of the respect and admiration of posterity. After having devoted ourselves to a careful study of his life, we find that our sentiments of commiseration for his destiny are more and more accentuated, because there is not, perhaps, another example in history where such varied and noble gifts were uselessly squandered in a foolish undertaking. Few men appeared on the world's stage better qualified to leave a lasting impress on history, and no man has more completely disappeared, without leaving a trace behind him. Julian's work was as fleeting and vain as the furrow of a ship on the surface of the water. As soon as the poop has passed through the waves, they reunite, and the furrow is no longer visible. Thus, no sooner had Julian expired in his tent on the far-

away plains of Persia, than all memory of his ephemeral attempt vanished, and History continued its course as if he had never existed. We may even say that Christianity was hardly aware of the war he waged against it. Its propaganda was not for a moment impeded; it pursued the even tenor of its way, and was uninfluenced in its aim and its ulterior manifestations.

Fortune, ever capricious, at the sunset of the Roman Empire, placed upon the throne of the Cæsars a man of brilliant intelligence, of strong and upright soul. And, in spite of all, his life had no effect whatever! His efforts were transient and fruitless. He was possessed of an entirely erroneous idea, which influenced him to act in a manner that could only lead to disaster. He went his way as a sleep-walker who is unconscious of the real world around him. In history there is no sadder spectacle than this dissipation of great possibilities, and, at the same time, none more interesting, because the study of the causes that rendered possible the growth of such a gigantic illusion in a mind otherwise intelligent and clear-seeing, furnishes us with the means of understanding and gauging, in all its importance, the religious revolution that caused the ruin of ancient civilisation.

These causes we have scrutinised and discussed in the course of this work. But it would be well for us to review and lay stress on them, because they justify our interest in Julian's life, and because,

in their analysis, lies the object of the long and patient study we have undertaken.

First of all, we must endeavour to cast a comprehensive glance at the whole picture of which we have examined the various parts. Christianity had succeeded in overcoming ancient civilisation, because it had offered to the world two principles entirely new—principles which responded to the condition and necessities of the times. On the one hand, it offered monotheism, which had become indispensable to a world for which the ancient polytheism had become deprived of all substratum; on the other hand, it offered a moral law that was in direct contrast with the ancient organisation of society, which was based on the superiority of force; a law that glorified the weak and the unfortunate; a law that hoped to inaugurate a new society, established on love and the recognition of human brotherhood. But Christianity, adopting as its two levers these two innovating principles, was only able to accomplish the negative part of its programme, for, although it shook from its foundations and overturned the ancient civilisation, it did not complete its positive part, so that when it issued victorious from the secular struggle that it had so heroically confronted, it had instituted a new society, but one still founded on the superiority of force, of violence and of injustice, and its divine laws remained naught but luminous ideals without

direct influence on the actions of men. What was the reason of this strange phenomenon? How was it that, although the ancient evils had been overthrown by a divine Gospel, evils arose much greater than those which had been fought and overcome? The cause of this historical phenomenon is that the categorical imperative of a moral law is not to be found beyond and above humanity, but rather in it, in the essential conditions of its spirit at a given moment in history, and as the consequent necessity of its organisation. It is not the moral law that recreates society, it is society already recreated that imposes a moral law. Now, a society is never recreated until it recreates its manner of comprehending itself and its conception of the universe. As long as there existed the anthropomorphic conception of the divinity, and the anthropocentric and geocentric conceptions of the universe, men might change their appearance, but, in substance, they were always equal to themselves. Accepting the idea of a supernatural and superrational power, of a transcendent Being possessed of absolute authority, humanity would always have been able to elude the laws that weighed upon it, and render that power subservient to its passions, by forcing it to make terms, and by, according to exterior forms, a value that should be considered a sort of compensation fixed by contract. The renewal of society could not have taken place until the conception of a supernatural arbiter was

exchanged for the conception of the unalterable determinism of a natural system. It is necessary that humanity should bring itself and the universe into conformity with truth before it can organise itself in harmony with law from which it cannot escape. The moral law created by Christ is the most sublime of all; it is absolutely perfect, but just because it was morally based on truth, this law was ineffectual in a world intellectually based on what was false.

More than half a century after Christianity had triumphed, Julian came to the throne, and found vice and crime dominant in the Court, the Church, and the clergy, divided by intestine strife, and all parts of the Christian Empire terribly corrupt. He deceived himself by supposing that he could save civilisation and render the world moral by returning to ancient principles, and by founding a sort of Christianised polytheism. Julian cannot, therefore, be considered an enemy of the advance of civilisation, because, on the one hand, he sought to convert the Hellenic pantheon into a monotheistic hierarchy, and, on the other, he recognised the virtues that Christianity might have diffused among humanity. But neither can we consider him as an innovator, because he was not able to present to the world any new intellectual principle; he only desired to clothe the ancient forms in those theological and moral principles which Christianity had proclaimed —those principles that had given it its victory. To

have initiated a truly genial and fruitful revolution, Julian should have become the promoter of a religion without sacrifices and without worship, and, intuitively divining the possibility of delivering the world and man from the terror of an absolute and transcendent authority and from the bonds of superstition, he should have laid the foundation of a civilisation based on Reason and Science. But of all this, Julian had not even the faintest conception!

Christianity, as it appeared in Palestine, in the person and the teachings of its Founder, was the pure expression of a moral sentiment, an aspiration towards an ideal of justice, and the meekness with which it opposed itself to the iniquities of the world was a protest fulminating in its eloquence. The preachings of Jesus, so original, because of the irresistible breath of poesy that animates them, and because of their simplicity of form, followed in the footsteps of those teachings initiated by the great prophets of the Israelitic decadence, who announced sanctity of life as a *sine quâ non* of the rehabilitation of their race. According to Jesus, and in this lies the novelty of his Gospel, holiness of life consists in the acceptance of the brotherhood of man before one unique Father, and, as a natural consequence, in the condemnation of arrogance and abuse of force, in the exaltation of the humble, the suffering, and the downtrodden.

The two truths inculcated by primitive Christian teaching, owing to their efficacy, were able to take root even in a soil to which they were apparently not adapted, because lacking the preparation of tradition. The first announced an impending transformation that would change the face of the world by punishing oppressors and uplifting the oppressed. The second affirmed the revelation of a divine Person, who had had an historic existence, and was a well-determined and concrete personality, upon the subject of whose existence there was no possible doubt, and in whom, therefore, one could believe with a security that could no longer be accorded to the exhausted divinities of the Hellenic Olympus. With its first promise, Christianity quenched the thirst for justice that tormented a world stifled by the abuse of might considered as right, while the revelation of this divine Christ responded to the evident desire of the world to possess a God in whom it could believe, in place of the ancient deities in whom it no longer had any faith. And when it saw this God take upon himself all the miseries of humanity, and die persecuted like the veriest slave, the apotheosis of misery was accomplished, and Christianity became the religion to which flocked all those who were unfortunate.

Christianity, therefore, in the early period of its existence, was a religion essentially moral and wholly dependent on sentiment. Paul, it is true,

as soon as he became converted, sought to give a rational explanation of the process of redemption. Being, above all, possessed of a strongly logical mind, Paul did not become converted until this process was thoroughly clear to him. But the Pauline conception, at first, remained only as a purely personal fact, and does not seem to have exercised an important influence on the doctrinal evolution of Christianity until a long time afterwards. It was the influence of his personality, of his spirit, of his will; it was the announcement of the impending regeneration of the world by the reappearance of Christ, Saviour of the oppressed, and its good tidings, that called to the new doctrine the crowd of believers. For nearly a century and a half Christianity maintained itself in this atmosphere of simple faith without any attempt at systematic doctrine. Those who called themselves Christians had but one faith common to all, a monotheistic faith founded on the revelation of God through the medium of Christ, the hope of an eternal life guaranteed by Christ, and a consciousness of the obligations assumed with baptism to lead a life in correspondence with the example given by Christ. The Christian writings anterior to the second half of the second century, in the *Διδαχή*, the First Epistle of Clemens Alexandrinus, the "Letters" of Ignatius, the writings of Papias, the Epistle of Barnabas, prove the complete absence of any apparent doctrine among the primitive

Christians, whose only rule of conduct was based on a few truths, and, above all, on certain promises revealed by Christ. These primitive Christians lived, with all the strength of their souls, for this faith, and did not find it necessary to represent it by a complexity of determined doctrines. What were the dogmatics of these Christians? Barnabas tells us what they were. "Three are the dogmas of our Lord, hope . . justice . . love."[1] And at the end of this Epistle, describing the two paths that lie open before the believer, the way of light and the way of darkness, he traces a programme, which is naught else than a faithful echo of the Evangelical moral, and in which there is not even the suspicion of a doctrinal principle.[2]

We find in the "Octavius" of Minucius Felix a singularly interesting proof of the poverty of philosophical doctrine in genuine Christianity even as far down as the second half of the second century. In the time of the Antonines, and more exactly during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, at which period this Dialogue was composed, Christianity began to find recruits even among the more cultured classes of Roman society. Minucius Felix was a lawyer of note, Ciceronian in his eloquence, a classical writer, and an erudite philosopher. His defence of Christianity gives us, therefore, an exact idea of

[1] Barnabas, *op. cit.*, i. 6. *τρία οὖν δόγματα ἐστὶν κυρίου, ἐλπίς, δικαιοσύνη, ἀγάπη.*

[2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, i. 18–21.

what Christianity meant to these men of culture. And we see plainly that the Christianity of Minucius Felix is only an extremely simple and rational monotheistic deism which does not contain the slightest trace of a theological and metaphysical system, which abhors the exterior forms of worship, and asserts that the conscience of man is in direct contact with God. "Qui innocentiam colit, deo supplicat; qui justitiam, deo libat; qui fraudibus abstinet, propitiat deum; qui hominem periculo subripit, deo optimam victimam cedit. Hæc nostra sacrificia, hæc dei sacra sunt. Sic apud nos religiosior est ille qui justior."[1] It was the high morality of Christianity, it was the rationality of the monotheistic idea, it was, in short, the simplicity of worship that constituted the attraction of nascent Christianity. The positive character of the Latin genius impeded the flowering of parasitical metaphysics.

But, however, in the Hellenic world, Christianity could not long retain this state of dogmatic simplicity. The Greek mind was wholly imbued with metaphysical speculation. It was not, therefore, possible that religion should remain aloof from metaphysics, because it is an institution in which is represented the bond that unites the world to its cause. It was destined to become metaphysical. Judaism had already suffered this fate, although, in its origin, like the

[1] Minucius Felix, *Opera*, 32, 3.

religion of Mahomet, it was absolutely impervious to all philosophical speculations. As soon as Judaism extended itself into the Greek world by means of its colonies, it was obliged to succumb to the modifying power of philosophical thought, and establish, on the basis of the Philonian Logos, a true and determined metaphysical system. It was in this atmosphere of Hellenised Judaism that the writer of the Gospel of John evolved the identification of the Logos with Christ, and thereby opened the door to philosophical speculation which, in a short time, took possession and made itself master of religion. Gnosticism was the first-fruit of the union of Christianity and the Greek world. Christian Gnosticism, which probably had its root in Hebraic Gnosticism, a degeneration of Philonian philosophy, was a species of premature Neo-Platonism—a fantastic and exuberant metaphysical conception that encompassed the idea of the Logos and stifled it with its luxuriant overgrowth. In Gnosticism, Christianity lost its character of a revelation, of a regenerative principle of the human soul, and was transformed into a complicated cosmology, where the process of creation resolved itself into a divine dualism, between the two terms of which a hierarchy of spirits and minor divinities was introduced—a hierarchy in which the Logos had the first place, as it was the immediate emanation of the supreme God.

We have said that Christian Gnosticism was

a species of premature Neo-Platonism. This is exact in the sense that each of these systems, by means of the multiplicity of divine emanations, recreated a real polytheism under the wing of a theoretical monotheism. But, notwithstanding this, there existed a profound antipathy between the two systems, because Gnosticism, engrafted on the trunk of Christianity, adopted its pessimistic conceptions concerning the world. And not being able to explain the creation of an evil world by a merciful God, it had fallen into dualism, and attributed to a wicked God the creation of matter. The process of redemption, perfected by the Logos, who had descended on earth for this purpose, consisted in the victory of the good God and the consequent liberation of souls from their servitude to matter and sin.

Now, this cosmological system must have been most odious to genuine Neo-Platonism; for Neo-Platonism the world is most excellent, perfect in all its parts, and represents a phase of an evolutionary process, in which good and evil have a relative value, and each its *raison d'être*—a process to which the idea of redemption is absolutely extraneous, because this idea of redemption implies the premise of an error or a fault that Neo-Platonism fails to see in the world, and which to it appears a lack of reverence for the conception of a God. Neo-Platonism, through Plotinus himself, has openly combated Gnostic pessimism, and it is also possible

that, in this direction, it encountered Christianity, including it in its polemic against Gnosticism.[1]

The apparition of Christian Gnosticism, which threatened to bring back Christianity to polytheism, had the consequence of developing, as an antidote to the false doctrine, an Orthodox theology, which served as an instrument to repel the Gnostic errors. Now, this Orthodox theology, as long as it remained in Latin surroundings, could not extend its wings to very lofty metaphysical flights. Notwithstanding that it assumed, as its first premise, the idea of the divine Logos, it was not the cosmological process, but rather the process of redemption, that constituted for it the essence of religion. The theology of Irenæus and Tertullian was not inspired by the creative Logos, but by the redeeming Logos. The Greek spirit prevailed, however, in Christianity, and this raised Christian speculation to a height on which Clemens Alexandrinus and Origen transformed it into an immense system of cosmological metaphysics, which was only to be distinguished from the Neo-Platonic philosophy that rose up beside it, by the presence of Christ the Redeemer.

We are already acquainted with the fundamental lines of Origen's conception, the consequences that were derived from it, and the development of Christian thought: we have seen how Christianity was transmuted into a luxuriant system of dogmatic

[1] See about this point the recent study of Carl Schmidt, *Plotin's Stellung zum Gnosticismus*, 1901.

theology, and how the world was agitated by a whirlwind of metaphysical disputes in which all religious interest was completely exhausted. Now, this transformation of religion into science, or, to be more exact, philosophy, signified that the necessary requisite for being a Christian was no longer the recognition of a rule of moral conduct and the ineffable aspiration of being united with God the Father as revealed by Christ. It was, on the contrary, the recognition of a given complication of philosophical dogmas, and the adherence to a certain given system, doctrinal and scholastic. This peculiar and essential transformation naturally tended to impoverish Christian morals. In the heroic times of primitive Christianity, to be a Christian it was necessary to practise certain virtues, as indicated by Octavius in the Dialogue of Minucius Felix; in the third and fourth centuries it was necessary to profess a determined doctrine. The wicked Constantine, who had committed every crime, and had murdered his son and his wife, was, in the eyes of the great Athanasius, an emperor to be venerated because he had called together the Council of Nicæa and had sustained the Homoousian formula. In the theological struggle that for three centuries agitated and divided the Church, both contending parties only demanded one thing of a Christian, viz., the profession of a doctrine. The Sermon on the Mount, the Epistle of Barnabas, and the *Διδαχή* had been superseded by those dogmatic formulas that

the Councils hurled one against the other, and which were upheld by the partisans of the opposing doctrines. When Christianity, in this condition of affairs, became Hellenised intellectually, it abandoned its primitive ideas of morality, and these were so completely forgotten that when, in the midst of the theological edifice, they desired to recreate a system of morals, they did not return to the Gospels, or even to Paul, but revived the traditions of Greek and Latin Stoicism. Even Ambrose, in his book *De Officiis*, merely copied the work of Cicero, which, in its turn, was only a revival of the treatise by the Stoic Panætius. But all redeeming efficacy in this Christianity must necessarily have become extinguished, when intellectually it lost itself in the arid desert of metaphysics, and morally abandoned the living principle of love and brotherhood, to replace on its pedestal the marble image of a virtue nourished on the abstract idea of duty. It became a religion of formalities, and, what is worse, a religion that no longer based its hopes of salvation on the renewal of the inner man, as Paul had taught, but rather on its recognition of exterior manifestations, doctrinal as well as ritual, and transmuted into a complicated superstition that luminous aspiration towards the ideal which it had affirmed at its birth.

But Christianity could not lose entirely its moralising efficacy, which had been the cause of its first victories and its *raison d'être*. The trans-

formation of the Church into an intellectual organisation, that only required the profession of a determined doctrine, brought with it the natural consequence of the secession of those spirits who sought something more in their creed, and were loth to content themselves with the mundane opportunism of an official religion. All these retired from the world and social intercourse, and originated monachal asceticism, to which we have already alluded, and this was the refuge that sheltered those ideal aspirations that Christianity had spread abroad in the world.

This then was the spectacle offered by Christian society in the second half of the fourth century, when the consequences arising from Constantine's recognition of Christianity as an approved religion had already become evident. Christianity became perverted in order to adapt itself to the exigencies of a society of which it formed an essential element of organisation. The most lofty ideals which it had revealed to the world, absolutely inapplicable to the real life of the times, disappeared in the isolation of the convents, and Christianity only seemed, to those outside the pale, as a destructive force that, destroying all the traditions of patriotism and culture on which the ancient civilisation had been founded, rendered its ruin inevitable. And when this Imperial philosopher, the only surviving member of the family of Constantine,

ascended the throne of the Cæsars, it was from this point of view that he regarded Christianity. Wholly devoted to Hellenic civilisation, he wished to prevent its destruction, and he considered it his supreme duty to defend it from the perils by which it was encompassed. For this reason he hated Christianity, which, it is true, desired the usufruct of the Hellenic heritage, wishing to speak and write according to its teachings, but, in reality, disorganised Hellenism and deprived it of all force of resistance.

As a thinker, educated in the Neo-Platonic schools, Julian found the doctrines of Plotinus and Porphyry, and, still further back, that of Plato, preferable to the doctrines of Origen and Athanasius, considering them only as the corruption of the source from which they were drawn. As a severe moralist, he was disgusted at the degeneration of the Christian Church as soon as it arrived at the dignity of a recognised religion. All passions and all vices had there a free scope. Neither the Imperial Court nor the great cities of the Empire were moralised by their conversion to Christianity. The most Christian Antioch offered Julian a scandalous display. He could not conceal his astonishment and anger, so he became most antipathetic to the Antiochians, who more easily forgave his hatred of their religion than his scathing criticism of their customs.

In this condition of affairs it seemed to Julian

that it was his duty to restore the ancient civilisation—Hellenism, as he called it—and he thought he would be able to do so by reconstructing polytheism and by directing towards it the current of popular sentiments and customs. But he knew that it would be impossible to accomplish his intention unless, at the same time, he initiated the reformation of polytheism. The naturalistic and national gods of the Græco-Latin Olympus were completely exhausted, and no one believed in their existence. Julian, as we have seen, tried to preserve them by transforming them into certain symbolical expressions grouped around one unique and divine principle, which, in its turn, was represented by the sun, who was, for Julian, the king of the universe. In this, he was only a Neo-Platonist, a follower of Iamblichus rather than of Plotinus, and by no means an innovator. But that which is really original and interesting is that Julian, in the revival of Hellenism, saw the victory of a lofty principle of morality and virtue. Julian was a man pre-eminently virtuous, austere, above all mundane pleasures, an idealist by nature and education. Now, he completely excluded the possibility of Christianity being a factor of morality. With the exception of the principle that inculcated the giving of alms to the poor, in which he had strongly admonished his followers to imitate the Galileans, Julian did not recognise that the Christians gave proof of any virtues. And, especially in its

highest sphere, among the bishops themselves, he only saw avidity of gain, ambition, furious disputes, incontinence, and violence. Now, he wished to introduce into the practical every-day life those virtues that worldly Christianity forced to take refuge in the convents. This was really the key-note of Julian's attempt. Christianity had not made the world moral, and he believed that he could do that by reviving Hellenism, which, for him, was the *summum* of wisdom, beauty, and justice.

To accomplish this, Julian wished to lead the world back to polytheism, but to a polytheism essentially reformed. The religion of the antique world was naught else than a function of the State. A conflict, a discord, a separation between religion and the State was inconceivable; religion was necessarily the handmaiden of the State, because it was the needful instrument, the indispensable element of its preservation. Persecuted Christianity gave to the world the conception of a religion that established itself as a power independent of the State. But as soon as it was recognised as a religion admitted by the Empire, it revealed its tendency to overrule the State, and, by inverting their relative positions, made religion, organised and disciplined by the Church, the dominating power of a subservient State.

Julian, however,—and this is one of the most singular features of his attempt,—desiring to make his religion a moralising institution, also wished

to separate it from the State; he therefore attempted to organise a true and proper polytheistic Church, which would be the ideal, and example of doctrine and virtue. We have noticed, in the analysis of the instructions given by Julian to important personages of his Church, that its organisation formed one of his principal preoccupations, and that no detail concerning it was too small or insignificant to escape his notice. We also noted that, for purity of intention and for the nature of the advice that he gave to his priests in relation to their conduct and habits, his letters might be considered as the "Pastorals" of some Christian bishop, inspired by early Christian ideals, and the effect they produce is most peculiar, as they are, at times, a genuine echo of that Gospel which Julian so cordially despised. The Emperor wished, in fact, to found his polytheistic Church on a basis of holiness, so that there would emanate from it a breath of moral purification. And to succeed in this, in the enthusiasm of his propaganda, he tilted against the prevailing habits and customs of his time. Julian was a polytheistic Puritan. To attempt this union of Puritanism and polytheism was an idea only possible to a dreamer educated in the mysticism of the Neo-Platonic sect. The world rebelled at this strange attempt to impose on it a severe morality in the name of Bacchus and Apollo, transmuted into symbols of mystical and philosophical

conceptions. Society, which in so short a time had been able to corrupt Christianity, was, by no means, disposed to allow itself to be corrected and disciplined by this reformed polytheism. Possibly a return to the joyous and free religion of genuine Hellenism might have been understood. But Julian, with his tedious and severe worship, despoiled polytheism of its principal charm, its supreme fascination, and with the exception of the initiated few who surrounded him, he only met with indifference and mockery. It is easy to understand his intentions. He wished to retain the ancient civilisation that was gradually falling to pieces by the dissolving action of Christianity, which deprived it of its traditions, its ideals, its beliefs—in a word, of all that complication of principles and sentiments which is the efficient cause of a civilisation. But, at the same time, he felt that Christianity had so effectively insinuated itself into all the pores, if we may so express it, of the social and individual organism, that the return to the ancient cult would be almost impossible, so he devoted himself to the enterprise, not less impossible, of Christianising society and religion, without allowing them to become Christian. He saw that Christianity in its metaphysics, and in the exterior forms of its cult, had so nearly approached polytheism, and was so profoundly modified through the influence of Neo-Platonism and the Mysteries as to appear almost its duplicate, and he believed he would be able to

abolish it, by putting in its place the philosophy of Plotinus and Iamblichus, and the rites of the Mysteries, to which this philosophy served as a basis, adding as a cement to hold the edifice together, the institution of a sacerdotal hierarchy, in which he would reproduce, but with a greater purity of life, the hierarchy of the Christian Church. By means of this the young enthusiast deluded himself, imagining he could save Hellenism, with its civilisation, its glories, its traditions, its poesy, and its arts!!

Julian did not understand that his reformed polytheism lacked the real power of Christianity, which enabled it to keep alive, and to become more and more powerful, even when its official recognition and its transformation into a function of the State deprived it entirely of that character of protest against the iniquities of the world, which had been the genuine cause of the fascination it had exercised at its first appearance. The world felt the necessity of believing in a God; it was not possible for it to content itself with goblins, with symbols, with metaphysical phantoms; it needed, if we may so express it, an historical God as an image, a representative, a guarantee of the supreme Power that rules the universe. If the God of the Jews had not been a God exclusively national, and, besides, if there had not been the insuperable obstacle of circumcision, perhaps the world would have been converted to him, and Jesus would

have been the real Messiah of Jahveh. As this was not possible, the Hebraic God, in order to be accepted in the West, was obliged to be Hellenised, by placing beside him a revealer, who became at the same time a son, and an intermediary between him and the world. The great force of Christianity is to be found in the fact that the reality of this proceeding was assured and guaranteed by the historical objectivity of the personality of Jesus. Jesus was, for the world, this representation, divine, determined, precise, and, above all, most lovable, and concerning whose existence there was no possible doubt. The ship of faith, after having breasted the angry billows, raised by the contending systems of philosophy, had at last found its haven of rest in which it could safely anchor. Notwithstanding the theological cloak that hampered and concealed the divine figure, notwithstanding the abasement that the passions, the prejudices, and the errors of man had wrought in the essential principles of his doctrines, this God was always there, living, and exercising over the souls his irresistible attraction. Compare the hymns overflowing with love that Augustine, in his *Confessions*, raised on high to God, and Julian's invocations to the Sun and the Mother of the Gods, and we shall immediately be convinced that the Christian was animated by a true and deep-seated sentiment, while the pagan needed an overpowering incentive of reason to arouse in him a fictitious enthusiasm. In the same

manner, we have already seen that Julian was greatly exasperated by the worship which the Christians rendered to the tombs of the saints and martyrs. But it is very natural that the memory of those who sacrificed themselves for their faith should excite a special ardour in the members of this faith, and elevate it to the ideal just because it was founded on a positive reality. Before these images, before the Christ who had lived in a certain given moment of history, and who had revealed divine promises in a language human and comprehensible to all, what possible efficacy could be found in those pallid and confused phantoms which Julian had evoked from the gloomy sanctuaries of the Mysteries and from the mystical lucubrations of the Neo-Platonic philosophers? If Julian had possessed a truly religious spirit, a spirit which was really pervaded with a thirst for the divine, he would immediately have felt the duel that he had promoted between the sun-god and the Christ would be fatal to his astral deity. It would be obliged to cede the field and vanish before the God-Man who confronted him in the plenitude of His reality.

Julian, who was a true Neo-Platonist, neither comprehended nor appreciated what was the real strength of Christianity, what was the essential cause that gave it such a marvellous victory over the powers of the world. This strength and this cause were to be found in the principle of redemp-

tion, of which Christianity was the welcome messenger. Christianity was a pessimistic religion, because it announced evil as a fact inherent in the world and humanity; but, at the same time, it held out to man the possibility of redemption, which was to be achieved by raising his thoughts, hopes, and aspirations from the wickedness of the earth to the justice, pardon, and felicity of heaven. A religion cannot have a strong influence on the human soul if it is not the fruit of a pessimistic conception. When the world appears evil, the human souls turn passionately towards the promise of happiness beyond the tomb. Faith in this promise inspires devotion, heroism, and the entire abandonment of self to the joy of sacrifice and the ascetic rapture of divine love. An optimistic conception destroys religion; it severs its most deep-seated roots, and reduces it to festive ceremonies and formal rites entirely devoid of soul. Certainly, a sublime thinker, such as Plotinus, could, through the contemplation of a perfect universe, raise himself to a rapturous vision of God, but the multitude is unable to follow him, and remains bound down by the preoccupations of a cheerful worldliness.

Julian could not understand that Christianity was strong because it was the religion of the unhappy, the religion of misfortune and repentance; he was unable to penetrate into the conception of redemption, which was its corner-stone. The

Logos Christ might find a rival in the symbolic deities of Neo-Platonism, but Christ the Redeemer conquered everywhere and everything, and, with a power that none could withstand, he drew away with him the souls who were thirsting for a moral palingenesia.

Julian was not a reactionary, as some, judging from false appearances, might consider him. Julian desired the preservation of polytheism, because he saw in it the balm that might save Hellenism; but he did not want the polytheism, with its naturalistic conceptions and its national forms, of an epoch which had for ever disappeared. He intended to reform and reorganise it according to the exigencies of the new era. But if Julian was not a reactionary, he was certainly the absolute living antithesis of what to-day is called a free-thinker. In this he was truly a man of his time. He had a taste for metaphysical speculations, but his mind was the negation of all that is scientific. He, more than any one else, recognised the necessity for a continual and direct intervention of the deity in every phenomenon of nature and in every event of life. The pagan superstition which he restored to a position of honour was even more impossible and obscure than Christian superstition. Perhaps, if, by an unlikely hypothesis, Julian's polytheism had been victorious, it would have been less fatal to science than Christian monotheism, because the polytheistic theocracy would never have

been so rigid as the orthodox theocracy which for centuries has hampered the world and obstructed human thought. But certainly it never entered into Julian's calculations to promote liberty of thought. Neither Julian nor his Neo-Platonic teachers had the slightest intuition of what science was. Julian was not inspired either by Epicurus or Lucretius, or even Aristotle. Rationalism served Julian, as it had formerly served Plato and Plotinus, and would later serve St. Augustine and St. Thomas, as an affirmation of the superrational and the supernatural, and as a means of imprisoning in its affirmation the thought of mankind, without allowing it a possible escape to examine the world and become cognisant of reality. But ancient civilisation declined and became extinguished in Neo-Platonism, as well as in Christianity, when it refused to acknowledge reason. There only remained man on earth, with his passions, the transcendent in heaven with its inaccessibility; between these two extremes, an impenetrable obscurity.

Considered in this light, Julian's attempt appears to lack all the charm of novelty. Julian was not an inventive genius. He imagined he could save ancient civilisation by keeping intact all the pomp of the religious institutions that had accompanied its development, and in which were concentrated so many of its memories, its traditions, and its customs. But he did not appreciate the fact that, although Christianity hastened its dissolution, this ancient

civilisation would naturally have disappeared in the course of events, because it lacked the essential principles of progress, and thus could not arrest the dissolvent action of time: it had become decrepit, it had lost all vital force, and was unable to resist the victorious onslaught of youthful and aggressive barbarism.

The essential principle of progress is science, not the science of hypotheses and fantastic metaphysical conceptions, but objective science, which discovers and follows the rational process by which the phenomenalism of nature is determined. Man, by means of his faculty of abstraction, ideally recreates in his thoughts the universe, representing it by a series of causes and effects that develop in space and in time. And in such an ideal representation is determined the life of the individual and of society. Now, when this representation is illusory and fallacious—and it cannot be otherwise when it is the fruit of a reason that feeds on itself—its result is a determination of life which is absurd and incapable of improvement, that is to say, of progress, because, without conscious objectivity, truth remains hidden. The anthropocentric conception of the universe and the anthropomorphic conception of the divinity, imagined as a power placed above and beyond humanity and nature, which it rules with an absolute authority, arise from an illusion of the human mind, and immobilise life in a network of errors in which it becomes more and

more entangled as it endeavours to extricate itself.

To attempt to introduce into this fundamental error of conception a just and true moral principle is absolutely useless, because the falsity of the conception in which the human mind is living, renders its application impossible, and sterilises and corrupts it. When we imagine that the world is governed by a God made in the likeness of man, a God who can be bribed by prayers and homage and offerings, the human passions that long to be satisfied immediately seek to find liberty of movement in a religion of forms that enables man to obtain from God the desired impunity. Of this, Christianity has given the most marvellous proof. The Gospel had really been Good Tidings; Jesus had come to reveal the sublime principle of brotherly love and human solidarity, the only fount from which the effective moral regeneration of the world could spring. But this fount was at once clogged. The world has not been moralised by Christianity, which, because of its erroneous metaphysical conceptions of the universe and of divinity, soon became a religion of external forms and fantastic doctrines imposed as absolute truths—a religion that, in the actions of its omnipotent hierarchy, had become the negation of itself, and has imposed on the world that society, brutal, savage, and terribly passionate, of which the *Divina Commedia* and the tragedies of Shakespeare present the living image.

When Giacomo Leopardi, as yet only a youth, in the solitude of his native village, buried himself with a tragic abandonment in the immensity of his thoughts, he discovered in reason the cause of social disorder, and rendered it responsible for human unhappiness. From reason, from reason alone, came all the evils in the midst of which man, separating himself from Nature, was lost, and became entangled as in a net from which he could not liberate himself. Leopardi found in this, his conviction, the confirmation of the Biblical myth concerning the fall of man. It was the use and the abuse of reason that alienated man from the state of nature. In this state he was guided by instinct, an infallible guide, because limited to the reality of phenomena ; when reason appears, instinct gives way to reason, to reason which is nourished on errors and phantoms, and imagines a world that does not correspond with the truth. And it is supremely interesting to see how Leopardi, scrutinising, with a singular acuteness of observation, the problem of human destiny, finds in his system the explanation of Christianity and the victory it had gained. When men arrived at a certain stage of culture and civilisation, reason became no longer sufficient to itself, because it disordered and destroyed with its own hands those illusions which it had created, and which were indispensable in order to render life tolerable to man. Humanity, therefore, would have rushed to its ruin if there had

not appeared a divine revelation which, beyond and above reason, guaranteed to man the existence of an ideal world, without the certainty of which the human structure, because of the irreparable errors of reason, would have crumbled to pieces like an edifice without cement.

But, concealed under this theory of the thinker of Recanati, there is always the sentiment of Nihilism, the sentiment of the *infinita vanità del Tutto*. The ideal world, guaranteed by revelation, is only a world of necessary illusions. From this arose the despairing attitude of the unhappy poet, who, recognising the errors of reason, saw no other means of salvation than in an illusion of which he himself demonstrated the vanity, while affirming it.

Now, Leopardi was right when he attributed to reason the cause of the errors and evils of humanity, because it created an ideal world based on that which is false. Animal communities are infallible, because, in the exercise of their functions, they are guided by an infallible instinct. But human society, till controlled by reason, will, by erroneous and illusory interpretations of reality, only be able to organise itself in violence, crime, and misfortune.

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum!

is a line that is not only applicable to the sacrifice of Iphigenia.

But Leopardi does not seem to understand that

if reason, with its premature and arbitrary abstractions, has the unfortunate faculty of attributing to the organism of the Whole arbitrary and fallacious causes from which arise a human organisation based on error, it also possesses the faculty of correcting itself so that, little by little, in the explanation of the universe, reason substitutes a conception of law for a conception of force, and, at the same time, divests the deity of the anthropomorphic covering for which it alone was responsible, and man of his anthropocentric prejudices, which are also its gift. The universe is a rational fact. But reason, even from its beginnings, although it made every effort, was unable to explain it rationally, so it idealised it, and made it an irrational illusion. Now, it is not in the renunciation of reason and in the persistency of the irrational that we can place the salvation of the world and humanity. The whole history of human progress proves that this salvation lies in truth alone, and in the ever-increasing light of an ideality that rationally represents and symbolises it.

It was scientific thought that gave a new direction to the ship of humanity. The day in which this movement towards a new horizon was begun does not coincide with the day in which Christianity offered to the world a new moral principle, perfect and sublime though it was, but rather with the day in which reason began to rend

asunder the dogmatic veil that obscured reality and to observe and experiment on its objective consistency. Copernicus, Kepler, Bacon, Galileo, Newton were the pilots who turned the ship from the course it had until then pursued. But many centuries had to pass before the rational knowledge of truth became an efficacious factor in social evolution. The great achievement of the nineteenth century, the achievement for which we may call it *par excellence* the century of innovation, is precisely that of having established the organisation of human energy on the basis of science, or, we should rather say, on the basis of truth.

Civilisation is not a phenomenon of sentiment, it is an essentially intellectual phenomenon. Man does not exercise virtue, that is to say, is not influenced by his respect and love for his fellowmen, because this respect and this love are taught or preached to him; for this to be the case, it is necessary that the duties inherent in the solidarity of humanity should be impressed on him, in the surroundings in which he lives, by a causal determinism from which he cannot withdraw. We have seen how man, recreating the world in his thoughts before the dawn of scientific knowledge, was only able to recreate, with his imperfect faculties, a tissue of errors, of phantoms and fantasies. And on this ideal basis, notwithstanding its falsity, man organised society. Christianity had offered to the world the principle of human

brotherhood, initiating among men a solidarity that should have inaugurated the reign of Justice. But Christianity did not dissipate the darkness in which reason groped its way, and thus left intact this fallacious ideal creation on which was founded the structure of society. In regard to human progress its work was necessarily barren, because the truth of the sentiment it had offered the world was sterilised by the intellectual errors which it encountered. In order that the true principle of human solidarity should develop in safety, it is necessary that the fundamental principle of humanity should be truth; it is necessary that the ideal world it creates in its thoughts should be a reproduction of the real world. The office of scientific knowledge is to render possible the conformableness of the ideal world to the real world. And here a phenomenon presents itself, singular in appearance, but natural in its essence. The moral principles proposed by Christianity, that were trampled upon during the centuries in which Christianity ruled as a religion, undiscussed and undisputable to-day, when Christianity has become a religion controvertible and controverted, reveal themselves as strong and efficacious. The fundamental virtues of Christianity—charity, brotherly love, a respect for the weak—in those centuries of darkness took root, here and there, in some elect souls, sheltered, perhaps, in the cells of cenobites; humanity, from time to

time, had recourse to these virtues as a remedy for its ills; but violence, arrogance, and cruelty were the recognised and uncontested rights of the strong. To-day there is a radical change. The necessity for the virtues that Christianity imposed is felt even by those who rebel against it, and we see, in the distance, the dawn of better times, although great masses of lowering clouds still obscure the sky, and society is engaged in a struggle where right too often gives way to might. In the spiritual world there is no phenomenon more wonderful than this stability of the Christian ideals, through which the moral principles, proposed by Christianity nineteen centuries ago, and which constitute its essence, have become so powerful and luminous that now it would be impossible to imagine a society not based upon them, and it is acknowledged that social progress is nothing else than the evidence of their application.

In ancient times, man's conception of the universe was derived from the metaphysical speculations of the great thinkers of Greece. The conception of life professed by the Christian was influenced by the divine revelation of a moral rule. The Church succeeded in forcibly uniting these two conceptions in an organic whole. This reunion was necessary for the victory of Christianity, but in it the moral conception was sacrificed to the philosophical conception, and this produced a society in which

the moral ideal was trampled under foot by those whose duty it was to realise it. The philosophical conceptions of antiquity having disappeared before the scientific conceptions of modern thought, the genuine Christian ideals reappear in all their force, and they reappear just because they contain the germs of an eternal truth.

This Christianisation of society, which is to-day manifested by the horror inspired by war, at one time the normal condition of humanity, and by the high ideas of duty that unite man to his fellow-men, so that it develops the sentiment of responsibility belonging to each individual in the solidarity of society, is, therefore, a phenomenon that proceeds indirectly from the scientific turn that, in the nineteenth century, has been taken by civilisation. The rational knowledge of reality, putting to flight errors and phantoms, enabled man to represent ideally in his own thoughts a universe based on truth, and, as in this representation the conception of the interdependence of all manifestations of life acquire an ever-increasing efficacy, it created a condition of things in which the moral virtues, divined by primitive Christianity, imposed themselves as a moral duty, as a categorical imperative from which it was more and more difficult for man to withdraw.

If antiquity, besides its knowledge of organisa-

tion, its poesy, and its arts, had possessed the scientific spirit, it would have been able to create objective science—the science that, investigating the universe by observation and experience, discovers the unalterable laws by which it is ruled, and uses them to enslave nature and subjugate it — civilisation would not have been retarded; the invasions of the barbarians would have been repulsed, and the course of civilisation, instead of making a deep, descending curve, to ascend again, later on, to the summit of modern thought, would have followed an ever ascending line, thereby gaining a few centuries for human progress. This lack of scientific tendency in the old civilisation appears inexplicable when we note the manifest inclination of the ancients in this direction. The great mind of Aristotle proposed the principle of the existence of a law intrinsic in the universe, considered as the product of a motive process, investigable and determinable by human thought. And when we remember that Euclid had already refined and brought to a high degree of perfection mathematics, that indispensable instrument in natural research; that Archimedes had discovered some of the principal laws of mechanics and physics; that Hero had foreseen the application of steam as a motive power; that Hipparchus and Ptolemy had applied calculation to the observation of celestial phenomena; that Galen had made profound observa-

tions on anatomy and physiology, — we must recognise that ancient thought, after having arrived at the threshold of objective knowledge, hesitated and was unable to enter its sanctuary. The cause of this fatal hesitation, which, by depriving ancient society of the possibility of recreating itself and progressing, condemned it to an inevitable decadence, should, we believe, be sought in the organisation of that society which was based essentially on servitude. The machinery of the ancient world was fed by the material force of man, uselessly wasted in a work also servile. From this arose the consequence that labour being imposed on, and not beneficial to, those who produced it, the natural impulse to obtain increasingly fruitful results was totally lacking. Everything remained enclosed and petrified in given forms, which contained no germs of continual and vital transformations. Science furnishes labour with the means of progress; but labour, when it employs these means, reacts, in its turn, on science, urges it on to benefit by experience, and incites it to wrest from its discoveries all their latent possibilities. The inequality of human rights, and the consequent lack of freedom of labour, barred the roads that human activity was destined to tread, and so a precious force was lost, which, if it had been permitted to develop itself freely, would have transformed the world

and enabled ancient civilisation to participate in that continual augmentation of the possibilities of mastering nature, that is to say, the possibilities of progress. Ancient societies were exclusively based on the strength of their natural dispositions; but these natural dispositions were corrupted by victories and prosperity, and they rapidly retraced their steps along the road which to them was the road of progress, engulfed in a decadence from which there was no deliverance.

This decadence was by no means retarded by Christianity. On the contrary, it had precipitated it, by overturning the religious and patriotic base on which the civil life of the empire was founded. Christianity had rationalised morals by offering to the world the principles of brotherly love and justice, but it did not rationalise the ideal representations of human thought, in which, on the contrary, it rendered still more decided and predominant the conception of the supernatural.

Christianity, when it became an established and predominant Church, gave to this conception a form vigorously dogmatic, and made it an instrument to imprison thought within insuperable barriers, and to destroy all liberty of movement. Now, liberty of thought and liberty of labour are both essential factors of the scientific cognisance of the reality; without these there can be no advance of civilisation nor secure

morality. To the ancient world the liberty of labour was unknown, and the Christian world was equally ignorant of the liberty of thought. Therefore, neither of these worlds possessed progressive civilisation. This civilisation did not dawn until these two liberties became allied in a common cause, and opened to the human mind the path by which it might arrive at rational knowledge, and weaken, if not radically destroy, the anthropocentric and anthropomorphic illusions by which man recreates in his mind a false image of the real world, based upon an erroneous conception.

The Emperor Julian's attempt to overthrow Christianity and to persuade the world to return to Hellenic polytheism, to substitute Hellenism for Christianity, is most interesting, because it is a symptom and a proof of the corruption into which Christianity had fallen, when, secure from persecution and recognised as a legal institution and instrument of government, it was no longer subjected to those conditions to which it owed its virtues. But Julian's attempt is to be condemned from a philosophical and historical point of view. From a philosophical point of view, because it did not give the faintest indication of a thought that strove to free itself from the fetters of the prevailing ideas of the times, and only represented, in another aspect, a thought that remained unchanged, tending

to sink the reason of man deeper in the mysterious and gloomy shadows of the irrational, and to substitute for the fruitful religious principles of Christianity the sterile formalism of lifeless phantoms. It has no historical value, because it passed as an ephemeral dream, without leaving the slightest trace. It was only a sign of the times, a sign that the ancient world was rapidly falling into ruin, and that, among these ruins, Christianity alone remained standing; Christianity, conqueror even of the barbarians, to whom it transmitted the miserable relics of a civilisation of which it was the sole heir, after having destroyed it. It was to save this civilisation that the unhappy Julian sought to raise from their tombs the exhausted battalions of the gods of Hellas.

But although this attempt was foolish and destined to perish, if it reveals a strange lack of foresight in him who promoted it, if we smile at the transport of mystical superstition in a man who pretended to oppose Christianity, and smile no less over the illusions of this thinker who did not perceive that he revolved in the same circle of thought as his enemy, if we reprove the intellectual prejudices that did not permit him to discover, under the corruption of Christianity, the vivifying principle that Christianity presented to the world, —we cannot exclude from our souls an intense sympathy for the man who, disappearing from the world at such an early age, still left in his actions

an admirable example of heroism, enthusiasm, and faith, who sacrificed his fortune and the immense power he had conquered to one idea, who, poet and soldier, fearless of all consequences, persecuted in the early years of his life, then suddenly raised to the summit of glory and power, seldom permitted the serenity of his thoughts and will to be disturbed, and ever kept before him the idea that was the guiding star of his existence. The Emperor Julian seems as a fugitive and luminous apparition on the horizon beneath which had already disappeared the star of that Greece, which to him was the Holy Land of civilisation, the mother of all that was good and beautiful in the world, of that Greece which, with filial and enthusiastic devotion, he called his only true country — *τὴν ἀληθινὴν πατρίδα.*

THE END.

INDEX

Acacius, 168.
Acantia, 352–3.
Acerenza, bust of, xxvii-xxxiv.
Ædesius, 16, 41, 205, 207.
Ædychius, 372, 570–1.
Aëtius, 166–8, 358–62.
Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, 156–60.
Alexander, Prefect of Syria, 119.
Alexandrians, Julian's edicts to the, 340–4, 372–81.
d'Alfonso's Essay on Julian, 509.
Aligild, 106.
Allard's *Julien l'Apostat*, 19, 498.
Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, 145, 172, 181, 290.
Amid, 90.
Ammianus Marcellinus, his description of Julian's personal appearance, xxxi; his career and character, 5–7; his account of the Persian expedition, 122–32, of Julian's death, 133, 137, 144; his opinion of the School Law, 404–5, of Julian's religious enterprise, 425, of the *Misopogon*, 433; his panegyric on Julian, 472–5; his accusations against Eusebia, 579, 584–8.
Ammonius Saccas, 193–4, 198.
Amœrius, Julian's letter to, 559–61.
Antiochians, dissensions between them and Julian, 432–70.
Apodemius, 109.
Arbetio, 106, 108, 109.
Arethusa, massacre at, 344.
Arianism, 37–8, 148; moral corruption in, 39; its origin, 155; its struggle with Orthodoxy, 156–73; opposed to monachism, 181; its distrust of metaphysical ideas, 187.
Arius, 156; his doctrines, 159; returns to Alexandria, 163; his death, 164.
Arsaces, King of Armenia, 120.
Arsacius, High Priest of Galatia, Julian's letter to, 297, 314–20, 421.
Artemius, 339.
Athanasius, 37–9, 145, 157–61, 164; persecuted by Constantius, 165–6; his writings, 170; his personality and career, 362–81.
Athens, Julian's sojourn in, 47–51.
Augustine, St., 161, 173–4, 181, 187, 198, 202, 240, 290, 396.

Babylas the Martyr, 354–7.
Bacchylides, Julian's love for, 66.
Banquet of the Cæsars, 513.
Barbatius, 68.
Barnabas, Epistle of, 599.
Basil of Ancyra, 166, 168.
Basil, friend of Julian, 561–3.
Basil the Great, 171; apocryphal letter to, 563.
Basilina, mother of Julian, 28.
Bidet, 290.
Boissier's chapter on Julian, 21.
Bostra, Julian's letter to the inhabitants of, 337–8, 381–7.

Cæsarea Mazaca, tumults at, 344.
Callistus, 153.
Canius, St., xxviii.
Celsus, 4, 272, 291–4.
Christianity, dissensions in, 131–86; its gradual transformation during the second and third centuries, 143; its strong organisation, 144; its assumption of pagan and worldly forms, 174–80; growth of monachism, 181–3, 606; Julian's attitude, 222–320; his hostile action, 321–420; contrast between Christianity and Julian's reformed polytheism, 606–16; its failure to regenerate ancient society, 183–4, 622–30. (See also Athanasius, Arianism, and many other such names.)
Christians, Julian's treatise against the, 271–94.
Chrysantius, 16, 41, 206–15.
Cinegius, 346, 352–3.
Clement of Alexandria, 150, 603.
Conodomarius, 68–70.
Constans, son of Constantine, 25, 27; defends the Orthodox cause, 165, 367.
Constantina, wife of Gallus, 44.
Constantine I., 25, 145; political motives for his treatment of Christianity, 146–8, 190, 389–93; his letter, "Quos ego," 158; convenes Council of Nicæa, 161; Julian's description of him, 257; introduced into *The Banquet of the Cæsars*, 515–24.
Constantine II., 25, 27.
Constantinople, Julian's triumphal entry into, 107; its court purged, 108–11.
Constantius II., massacres his relatives, 25; master of the whole Empire, 27; sends Julian to Macellum, 33, and to Nicomedia, 40; instigates the assassination of Gallus, 43; sends Julian to Athens, 47; names Julian Cæsar, 55, and sends him to Gaul, 57; orders him to transfer his troops to Persia, 77, 90; furious at news of Julian's revolt, 92; conspires with the barbarians

against Julian, 95; his campaign against the Persians, 115; his death, 106; favours the Arians, 164–9, 222; his anti-Pagan edict, 345; praised by Gregory of Nazianzus, 489; Julian's discourses in his honour, 507–12; his dealings with Sallustius, 539.
Constantius, Julius, father of Julian, 25.
Crispus, murder of, by his father Constantine, 261.
Ctesiphon, siege abandoned by Julian, 127.
Cumont, 290.
Cynicism, 253–4.
Cyril of Alexandria, 272, 320.

Dagalaif, 102.
Decentius, 77, 82.
Deodorus, 339.
Dionysius of Alba, 166.
Domitianus, the prefect, 360.
Dracontius, 339.

Elpidius, 94.
Epictetus, Bishop, 96.
Epicurus, 305–6.
Eugenius, Julian's letter to, 558–9.
Eumenes, 218; Julian's letter to, 219.
Eunapius, his history and *Lives of the Sophists*, 16; his account of Iamblichus, 203.
Eusebia, wife of Constantius II., protects Julian, 45–7; persuades Constantius to name Julian Cæsar, 55; Julian's affection for, and panegyric of her, 58, 512; her death, 90; her alleged poisoning of Helena, and illicit relations with Julian, 94, 579–90.
Eusebius the Eunuch, 89, 109, 332, 569.
Eusebius the Neo-Platonist, 41, 206–9.
Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomedia, related to Julian, 25; teacher of Julian, 27; death of, 33; accused by Alexander of heresy, 158; his Semi-Arian formula, 163; re-admitted to Constantine's favour, 163; his hostility to Athanasius, 365–7.
Eusebius of Vercelli, 166.
Euterius, 92.
Evargius, Julian's letter to, 564–6.
Evemerus, 67, 87.

Florentius, Prefect of the Pretorium, 72–5, 77, 80–2, 101, 567–9.
France, Anatole, on the relations between Eusebia and Julian, 580.
French Associations Law compared with Julian's School Law, 419.

Gabelli, 414.
"Galilean, Thou hast Conquered!" the famous saying, 141.
Gallus, brother of Julian, 26, 33, 355, 360; appointed Cæsar, 39; assassinated, 43; his character, 44.
Gardner, Alice, her *Julian, Philosopher and Emperor*, 22.
Gaudentius, 80.
Gaul, Julian's campaign in, 57–100.
Gaza, massacre at, 344.
George, Bishop of Alexandria, 36–7, 338–43, 369, 570–2.
Germinius, 168.
Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, 19.
Gnosticism, 151, 601.
Gomoarius, 106.
Gospel, the Fourth, 234–6, 601.
Gratian, 172–3, 181.
Gregory of Nazianzus, 171; his bitter enmity to Julian, 11, 320; his discourses, 12; contrasted with Libanius, 12; his account of the confinement of Julian and Gallus, 34–6; his recognition of the corruption of Christians, 39; his description of Julian when at Athens, xxx, 49–51; his general account of Julian, 488–506.
Gregory of Nyssa, 171.

Hakusaki, 269–70.
Harnack's article on Julian, 21.
Hecebolius, tutor of Julian, 40–1.
Helena, wife of Julian; her marriage, 57; her death, 94, 579–90.
Hellenism, Julian's education by Mardonius in, 28–32, 37; his boyish defence of, 36; his conversion to, 42; his restoration of, 111, 187. (See also Neo-Platonism.)
Heraclius, Julian's discourse against, 252–60.
Hermogenes, Julian's letter to, 333–4.
Hilary, 171.
Hippolytus, 153.
Hosius, Bishop of Cordova, 161.

Iamblichus, 193, 203–5; Julian's letters to, xvi, 550–4.
Irenæus, 603.

Jesus Christ introduced into the *Banquet of the Cæsars*, 521–4.
Jovinus, 100.
Jovius, 100.
Judaism, Julian's account of, 275–89; his attitude towards the Jews, 303–4, 310–4.
Julian (Flavius Claudius Julianus), the personification of the Pagan reaction, xxiii; polemical attitude of ecclesiastical tradition towards him, 1–5; interest of his character and career, 2; sources for his biography, 5–22; his writings, 13–5; his career, a singular historical problem, 22–4; his birth and parentage, 25; childhood, 27–33; confinement at Macellum, 33–9; sent to Nicomedia, 40; conversion to Hellenism, 41; protected by Eusebia, 45–7; stay at Athens, 47–51; intercourse with Gregory of Nazianzus, 48–51; called to Milan, 52; named Cæsar, 55; married to Helena, 57; sets out for Gaul, 57; his marvellous administration of Gaul, 62–5; his first campaign, 66; defeats Conodomarius at Strassburg, 70; campaigns of, 74–6, 358, 359,; proclaimed Emperor by the troops in Paris, 79; reasons of his rebellion, 91; his letter to Constantius, 92; fresh campaign across the Rhine, 94; death of his wife, 94; discovers conspiracy between Constantius and the barbarians, 95; conceals conversion to paganism, 97; advance along the Danube, 100–4; entry into Constantinople, 107; purges the Court of Constantinople, 108–9, 331–4; restores the worship of the gods, 111; campaign against the Persians, 113–32; death, 132; attitude towards Christian divisions, 169; his Neo-Platonist teachers, 203–18; his theology, 225–320; his discourse to King Sun, 231–41; his Discourse to the Mother of the Gods, 241–51; his Discourse against Heraclius, 252; reasons of the failure of

his Anti-Christian propaganda, 264–71, 319; his treatise against the Christians, 271–94; his desire for a Christianised polytheism, 294–320; his letters to Arsacius, Theodorus, and an unknown person, 297–320; his tolerance, 324–62, 498–503; his edicts to the Alexandrians, 338–44, 372–81; his conflict with Athanasius, 362–81; his letter to the people of Bostra, 381–7; his School Law, 394–420; his *Misopogon*, 430–63, 469; description of him by Ammianus Marcellinus, 472–4, by Libanius, 474–8, by Gregory of Nazianzus, 488–506; his superstition, 485–8; his *Banquet of the Cæsars*, 513–26; his letters, 526, 550–72; his Epistle to Themistius, 527–38; his Exhortation to Sallustius, 539–47; his wise administration, 573–8; his relations to Eusebia and his wife Helena, 579–90; reasons of the failure of his schemes, 591–631.
Julius Cæsar, introduced into the *Banquet of the Cæsars*, 514–20.
Julius I., Pope, 366.
Justina, 172.

Keim, Theodor, 272.
Koch's work on Julian, 20, 88.

Lenormant, F., on the bust of Acerenza, xxvii–xxx.
Leonas, the Quæstor, 93.
Leontius, 359.
Leopardi, 620–1.
Libanius, 5; his literary career and writings, 7–9, 400; his enthusiasm for Julian, 9; his discourses, 9 and 10; contrasted with Gregory of Nazianzus, 12; displeasure at Hecebolius' influence over Julian, 40; Julian reads his lectures, 41; his account of Julian at Athens, 48, of the treachery of Constantius, 96, of Julian's advance along the Danube, 101–21, of the Court of Constantius, 110, of the Persian expedition, 122–33, of Julian's death, 133–7, 139, 144, of Julian's tolerance, 330; his discourse "About Temples," 346–54, 495; letter of Julian to him, 422–4, 556–7; his discourse to the Antiochians, 465–8; general description of Julian's character, 474–88.
Licinius, the Emperor, 145.
Logos doctrine, Controversies, 148–61; prologue of the Fourth Gospel compared with Julian's teaching, 234–6.
Lucian of Antioch, 154–5.
Lucillianus, 80, 102.
Lupicinus, 77, 81–2.

Macellum, Julian confined at, 33–9.
Magnentius, 27, 165.
Marangas, battle of, 130.
Marcellus, 67.
Marcus Aurelius, Julian compared with, 63; introduced into the *Banquet of the Cæsars*, 513–20.
Mardonius, teacher of Julian, 28–32, 447.
Marius Victorinus, 171.
Martianus, 104.
Martius the Quæstor, 360.
Maximus, 17, 41–2, 87, 206–14, 322–4, 548–9, 557–8.
Milan, Council of, 166.
Milan, Edict of, 145, 147, 389.
Milan, Julian's first stay at, 45; his second visit to, 52–7.
Minucius Felix, 599.
Misopogon, 28, 140, 273, 430.
Monachism, 181–3, 295, 299, 606.
Monarchianism, 151–4; its two schools, 152.
Mother of the Gods, discourse to the, 241–51.
Mücke's *Flavius Claudius Julianus*. 20.
Müller, 175.

Nahrmalcha, siege of, 124.
Naville's book on the philosophy of Julian, 20.
Nebridius, 82, 93, 99.
Necrologia of Libanius, 474.
Neo-Platonism, xiv, xv; its *influence* on Julian, 41–3, 555; its belief in the supernatural, 121, 226–9; its ideals, 144, 184–221; its exponents, 193–218; compared with Christianity, 144, 186–8, 199, 221, 228, 601–3.
Neumann's work on Julian, 20, 272.
Nevitas, 100, 103.
Nicæa, Council of, 161–3.
Nicomedia, Julian's stay in, 40–3.
Nigrinus, 104.

Oribasius of Pergamum, 17, 86–7, 215–6; Julian's letter to, 567.
Origen, his doctrines and profound influence on subsequent speculation, 150, 173, 186, 198, 603.
Origenism, or Semi-Arianism, 162–73, 357–8.

Palladius, 109.
Panætius, 605.
Paris, Julian's revolt at, 76–93.
Patripassianism, 153.
Paul, St., 265, 270, 277, 598.
Paul, courtier of Constantius, 109.
Paul of Samosata, 152, 154–5, 173.
Paul, a spy, 80.
Paulinus of Treves, 166.
Pegasius, 426–30.
Pentadius, 80, 82, 92.
Persians, Julian's campaign against, 70, 113, 525; Constantius' campaign against, 115.
Pharianus, 218; Julian's letter to, 219.
Philostorgius, the Arian, 18.
Plato, 188, 281, 531.
Plotinus, 193–200, 602.
Polycletes, 94.
Pontitianus, 181.
Porphyry, the Neo-Platonist, 151, 193–4, 197, 202–4, 272–3.
Porphyry, official in Egypt, Julian's letter to, 571–2.
Postal Service, Julian's re-organisation of, 575–8.
Præsius 416.
Priesthood, Julian's ideal of, 300, 304.
Priscus, 16, 206–7, 212–3.
Proclus, 193.
Procopius, 120.
Pyrisaboras, taking of, 124.
Pyrrho, 305.

Reinach, Salomon, on the bust of Acerenza, xxix, xxxiii–iv.
Rimini, Synod of, 169, 358.
Rode's history of Julian's reaction, 21, 38, 498.

Rufinus, his continuation of the History of Eusebius and his account of the reaction of Julian, 18.

Sabellianism, 153.
Saints, Worship of, 177, 287, 354, 614.
Sallustius, 81, 100, 121, 217, 539; Julian's Exhortation to him, 538–47.
Sapores (Shapur), King of Persia, 115, 129–30.
Scientific spirit, lacking in the ancient world, 622–30.
School Law, Julian's, 394–420.
Sebastian, 120.
Seleucia, Synod of, 169, 358.
Shapur. *See* Sapores.
Simplicianus, 416.
Silvanus, 6, 51, 55.
Sirmium, conspiracy at, 51, 54.
Socrates, the historian, his account of Julian, 18, of the expurgation of Constantius' Court, 111, of Julian's tolerance, 328–9.
Sopater, 424.
Sozomenes, his re-editing of the History of Socrates, 18; his view of the murder of Julian, 137, of Constantine's conversion, 46, of Julian's alleged persecutions, 329–30.
Stoicism, 254.
Strassburg, Battle of, 68–71.
Strauss, 19, 229.
Sun, discourse to the, 221–31.
Syrianus, 367.

Tatian, 327.
Taurus, 101.
Tertullian, 153, 603.
Thalia of Arius, 159.
Themistius, Julian's letter to, xxx, 527–38.
Theodoret, 18, 40.
Theodorus, Julian's letter to, 297, 309.
Theodosius I., 10, 145, 171, 173, 181, 346–54.
Theodulus, 327.
Theognis of Nicæa, 163.
Theolaiphus, 106.
Tigris, passage of the, 126.
Titus, Bishop of Bostra, 382–7.

Ursacius, 168.
Ursicinus, 9.
Ursulus, 109.

Vadomarius, 95.
Valens, 168.
Valentinianus II., 172.
Vespasian, 44.
Victor, Aurelius, historian, 103.
Villari's *Barbarian Invasions*, 19.
Vollert's work on Julian's opinions, 21.

Waldeck-Rousseau, 418.

Zenobia, 152.
Zephyrinus, 153.
Zosimus, his testimony to Julian's greatness, 17; his account of the Persian expedition, 122.

Printed by Morrison & Gibb Limited, *Edinburgh*